

ONLY
IN THIS
ISSUE!

3 THRILLING DIVES IN GRAND BAHAMA

skin diver

WORLD'S LARGEST SCUBA & SNORKELING MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 1997

WRECK DIVE SPECTACULAR!

12 UNDISCOVERED
TREASURE
WRECKS

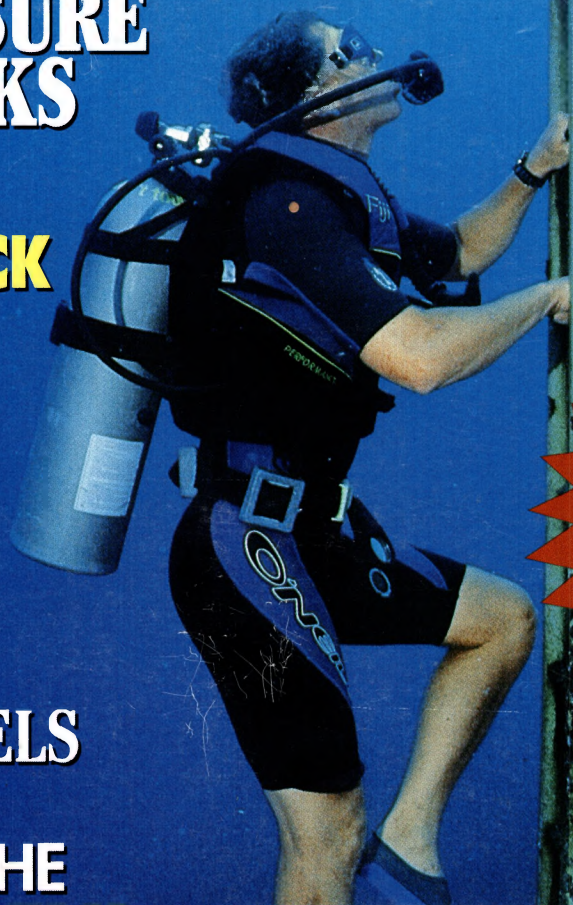
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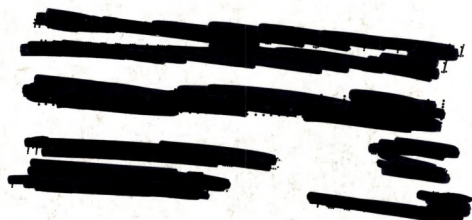
7 CARIBBEAN
ISLAND JEWELS

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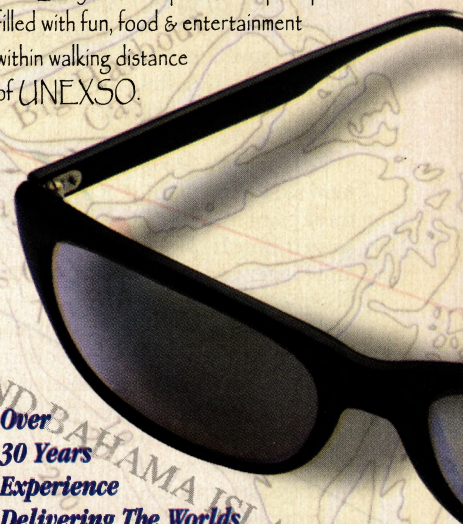
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Most marine conservation reports bring us depressing news—generally some sort of horror story about the wanton destruction of a reef or

animal species. Here, for a change, is some good news about how a precious natural resource can be saved. Before giving you the good news, permit me to set the stage with a brief historical overview.

When I first started diving Florida waters in the late 1950s, Jewfish were everywhere. This grouper, *Epinephelus itajara*, was king of the reef—a giant that could grow to seven feet long and weigh up to 800 pounds. Needless to say, it soon became a popular trophy fish among spearfishermen.

During the 1960s, there were many hero stories and photos of divers spearing these giant fish. And, as the technology of spearfishing improved, with powerheads and bigger guns, more and more Jewfish became trophies.

By the 1970s, Jewfish were becoming scarce in Florida waters. Recreational divers seldom, if ever, encountered one. At the sight of a diver, the few that survived would flee to the deep or hide in the darkest and farthest recesses of reef caves. This shortage, in turn, created a new trend.

Recreational divers began bypassing Florida waters, traveling instead to Caribbean islands where Jewfish could still be seen, admired and photographed. There were many stories of tame Jewfish in the British Virgin Islands, The Bahamas, Cayman Islands and so on. But once again, spearfishing technology, coupled with the lack of protective laws, formed a lethal union that managed to wipe out most of the Caribbean Islands' Jewfish. They are gone.

Then in 1990, a wonderful thing happened. Florida State Marine Fisheries Commission designated the Jewfish a

protected species. The state passed a law that prohibited the harvest of Jewfish in state waters, including possession, landing, purchase or sale of Jewfish meat. Apprehension of violators could result in severe penalties.

This past summer I had an opportunity to once again travel and dive Florida waters, and I very quickly discovered the Jewfish were back! Everywhere I went, there were reports of Jewfish. You can find them on at least three wrecks off Key West, a wreck off Marathon, another wreck off Islamorada and two or three spots off Key Largo. What's more, these Jewfish appear less afraid of divers than their predecessors. Mostly young, weighing 60 to 250 pounds, they will eventually grow into giants. The same miracle is happening all along the west coast of Florida, as well as Miami, Ft. Lauderdale and most of Florida's east coast.

If I were to make a prediction about the future of recreational diving, I would have to say the Jewfish may become Florida's next major U/W attraction. A living, happy Jewfish can be worth a whole lot more to Florida's economy than the sale of its carcass. And, just maybe, other Caribbean island nations will follow Florida's conservation example and provide protection for the beloved Jewfish. 🐟

Note: You can be part of this new conservation trend by sending us stories and reports about Jewfish recently encountered in Florida. Write to: The Editor, Skin Diver, 6420 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90048, e-mail: skindiver@petersenpub.com or fax (213) 782-2121.

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Photos: Eel by guest Michael Troitino;
 Octopus by guest Richard Schumann; Diver by Capt. Wayne Hasson

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Sere-Ni-Wai, Fiji

skin diver

C O N T E N T S

Volume Forty-six • Number Twelve



92

Dive Roatan's newest wreck

34
*Make new
friends in
Cozumel*



Fantastic adventures on the Fiji Aggressor **44**

About the cover: Andy Dellenbach climbs the towering mast of El Aguila, Roatan's newest shipwreck. This 220 foot supply freighter was recently sunk in 100 feet of water off Bailey's Key, just three minutes from the dock of Anthony's Key Resort. For more on the sinking of El Aguila, turn to page 92. Photo/Rick Frehsee.

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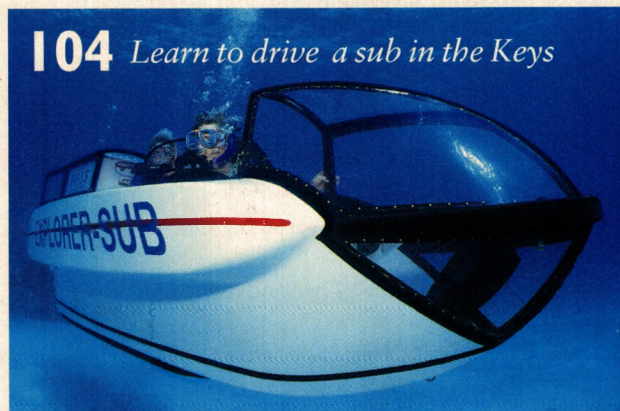
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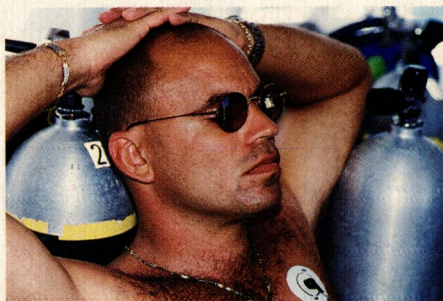
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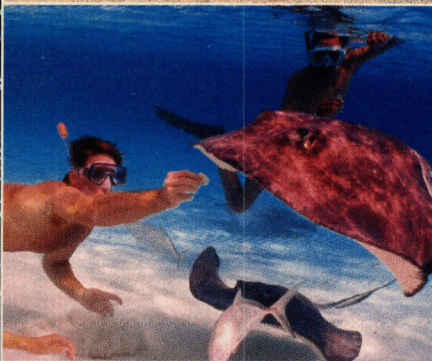
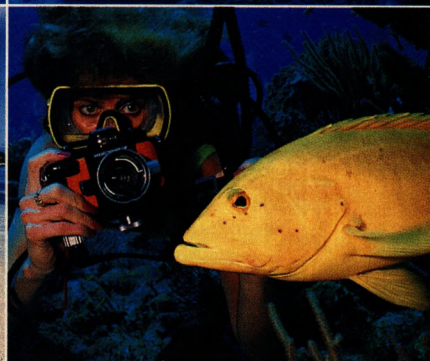
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NASDS Ocean Diver Program

ADD FUN AND EXCITEMENT TO YOUR OPEN WATER TRAINING

BY TY SAWYER

All certifications are created equal. Right? Well, no. The National Association of Scuba Diving Schools (NASDS) has developed a curriculum that expands a divers' knowledge beyond the standard requirements for open water certification. Called the Ocean Diver Program, it gives divers in training a real sense of the variety, fun and excitement that keeps many of us diving even after years of travel and thousands of dives.

Developed by a Dallas divemaster named Britt Ross, the program allows divers in training to gain valuable experience and knowledge of such diverse activities as underwater photography, fish identification, computer diving and boat diving. There is even an optional shark diving element for those in search of a visceral experience. Besides infusing the thrill of diving into novices, the Ocean Diver Program sends forth divers who are more prepared for a broader range of experiences. They are also more apt to be careful observers of the marine environment and have a greater level of comfort—and thus safety and enjoyment—than new divers coming out of a more conventional certification program.

THE OCEAN DIVER PROGRAM

UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY: At one time or another we all want to share the underwater world we enjoy with others. Underwater photography allows us to do this as well as being a visual memory of our adventures. NASDS recommends the

simple to use Sea & Sea camera systems, but any will do. Valuable hands-on time is spent with the camera of choice both topside and U/W.

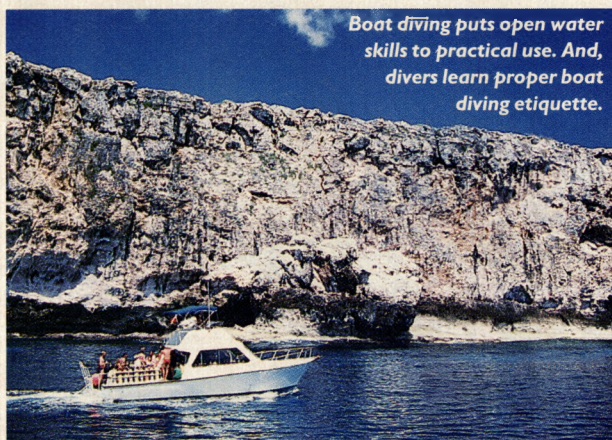
REEF FISH IDENTIFICATION: Learning to carefully observe the underwater realm is a skill that will bring the reef to life almost as if by magic. And, as new divers will discover and experienced divers know, it is a skill that is continually honed; perfection is almost always a fin or two away. This course, based on the superlative Paul Humann fish I.D. books, increases diver awareness underwater and can do wonders for capturing, in photographs, the more elusive creatures.

COMPUTER DIVING: Yes, you learn the tables, suffer through hand calculations of no decompression time, repetitive groups, etc., and along comes a computer to do all the thinking for you. While the knowledge of table use is essential (what if your computer zonks out!), computers can quickly and more accurately keep track of multi-level diving and repetitive dives than divers. Computers also free you to observe the fishlife and take those award winning photographs.

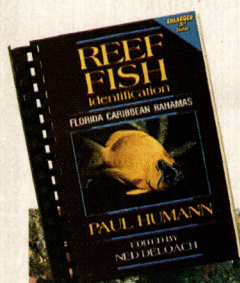
BOAT DIVING: This segment puts all the skills a diver learns for open water diving to practical use. And, there is a definite etiquette to diving from a boat, of which everyone should be aware.

As you can see, the Ocean Diver Program introduces new divers to more than just the mechanics of breathing U/W. It introduces them to all the great toys and exciting activities, giving them an opportunity to utilize new skills and maximize their enjoyment.

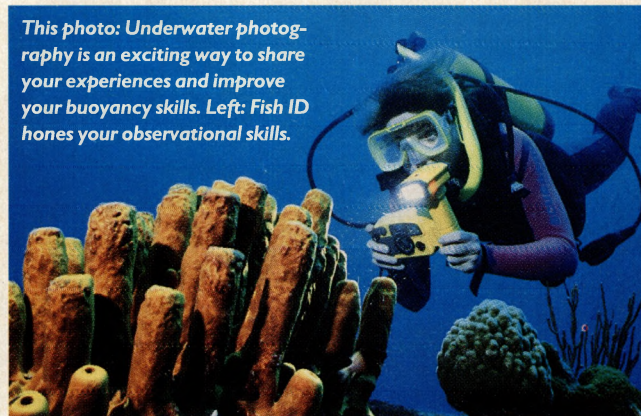
For information on this innovative program, contact NASDS at 1012 S. Yates, Memphis, Tennessee 38119; phone (901) 767-7265, (800) 735-3438 or fax (901) 767-2798. 🐠



photo/Chris & Donna McLaughlin



photo/Mike Vande Lune



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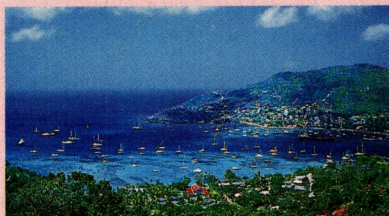


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SCUBA QUIZ

TWO BY TWO

BY DENNIS K. GRAVER

Select the two most correct answers for each question.

- An air embolism while scuba diving would most likely be caused by:
 - A rapid ascent
 - Rapid breathing while ascending
 - Holding the breath while ascending
 - Excessive bottom time
- Vertigo experienced without rupturing an eardrum would most likely be caused by:
 - Cold water in one middle ear
 - Cold water in one outer ear
 - A sudden pressure change in one ear
 - Excessive pressure in the middle ears
 - Excessive pressure in the outer ears
- The two most frequent signs and symptoms of decompression illness are:
 - Unconsciousness
 - Pain
 - Dizziness
 - Extreme fatigue
 - Numbness
- Loss of body heat while diving will, in time, cause:
 - Nitrogen narcosis
 - Dehydration
 - Mental impairment
 - Hypocapnia
- The two factors that have the greatest effect on buoyancy are:
 - Fluid density
 - An object's volume
 - An object's weight
 - An object's shape
 - Depth
- A steel 71.2 cubic foot scuba cylinder holds:
 - 71.2 cubic feet at 2,475 psig
 - 71.2 cubic feet at 2,250 psig
 - 64.48 cubic feet at 2,250 psig
 - 78.62 cubic feet at 2,475 psig
- During an emergency ascent it is best to:
 - Exhale continuously
 - Attempt normal breathing
 - Ascend rapidly
 - Ascend at a moderate rate
 - Ascend as slowly as possible
- If you suspect you might have decompression illness, you should:
 - Go to a medical facility as soon as possible
 - Go to a hyperbaric chamber as soon as possible
 - Call the Divers Alert Network if your symptoms do not improve
 - Breathe oxygen immediately
 - See your doctor as soon as possible
- The best ways to minimize the risk of decompression sickness when diving repetitively are to:
 - Limit depth to 100 feet
 - Increase surface intervals
 - Reduce bottom times
 - Do the deepest dives first
 - Do a safety decompression stop at the end of every dive
- Which of the following violations of safe diving practices are the most frequent causes of decompression illness:
 - Ascending too rapidly
 - Failing to do a safety decompression stop
 - Repetitive multi-level dives for more than three consecutive days
 - Pushing dive times to the maximum no decompression limits
 - Omitting required decompression

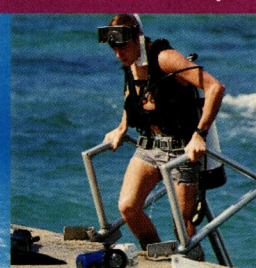
Answers: 1. A & C, 2. B & C, 3. B & E, 4. B & C, 5. B & C, 6. A & C, 7. B & D, 8. A & D, 9. B & C, 10. A & C

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Generally, when a manufacturer introduces an underwater housing designed for a specific land camera, there are trade-offs. In an effort to simplify and streamline the housing, many of the camera's functions are eliminated. That's not the case, however, with the CX-600 housing for the Canon Rebel G camera. Sea & Sea Underwater Photography USA has produced a compact camera housing that is not only streamlined but retains all the Rebel G's capabilities. This makes it one of the most versatile camera housings on the market today.

When you pick up the CX-600, you will be amazed at its size. Since it uses few mechanical controls, the aluminum housing is tightly molded around the camera. It fits like a glove, with very little space between the housing and the camera. The housing breaks down into three basic parts: the lens port, the backplate and the main housing. The port screws onto the main body and uses a wall type O-ring to maintain the seal. The backplate is held in place with two catch and carry latches with safety locks that cannot be opened accidentally underwater. Simply push forward on the safety locks, move the latch to the side and the backplate easily separates from the main body.

Two large screws at the bottom of the

main housing hold twin handgrips. The tops of each handle have a slotted fitting that mates to Sea & Sea strobe arms. These fittings can be removed and replaced with a variety of arm adapters. The strobes connect to one of two bulkhead connectors (on each side of the viewfinder). Thus, if you use two strobes, there is no need for a dual connection.

The shutter is in front of the right handgrip. It is placed so that by gently pressing your index finger the camera will autofocus the lens and trigger the shutter.

Nine controls on the CX-600 give you full control over the Rebel G camera. With all the camera controls at your fingertips, you can easily set it for full automatic, semi-automatic or manual. As each control is operated, the information is displayed in a large window on the top right of the housing. The mode dial, on the top left of the housing, operates 14 separate functions: ISO film speed, automatic, depth of field, program exposure mode, aperture exposure mode, shutter exposure mode, manual exposure mode, power off and six specific shooting situations, including full auto mode, portrait, scenic, close-up, action and backlighting. The electronic dial, on the top right of the housing, allows you to modify the selections using the mode control. For exam-

ple, you might select aperture priority with the mode control and then select a specific f/stop using the electronic dial.

Two small buttons on the left edge of the viewing window give you access to some of the Rebel G's more advanced features. The upper left button, the autofocus selector, allows you to choose one of three focus points in the viewer or all three. The function button lets you select red eye reduction, beeper sounds, multiple exposures or access the exposure bracket function. A single lever on the back right hand side of the housing also allows you to make exposure compensation up to plus or minus two stops.

If you are planning on using a zoom lens or want to manually focus another lens, a large mechanical control next to the left handle both rotates and pulls out from the housing to make the necessary adjustment to the lens inside. This control mates with a special focus/zoom ring that slides over the lens. If you don't plan on using either function, the ring is not needed.

There is a silver button on each side of the housing back. The right button locks the exposure when depressed; the left one turns on a small viewing light inside the housing. The light stays on for ten seconds, then goes out. This is a great feature for night or deep diving.

Sea & Sea's CX-600

CANON REBEL G HOUSING
IS SUPER COMPACT
AND USER FRIENDLY

TEXT & PHOTOGRAPHY
BY JACK AND SUE DRAFAHL



The best way to open the housing is to set it face down on the lens port or between your knees. Release the safety catches and undo the two clamps so the backplate can be set aside. As you set it down you will notice a moisture detection circuit built into the back of the housing. If moisture is detected, a light will be displayed.

To change film, remove the backplate, open the camera back, load film and close the back. You don't have to remove the camera, align gears or make adjustments.

If you do want to remove the camera, simply press a small lever at the bottom right of the camera. This releases a quick-disconnect device on the base of the camera. Next, remove the hotshoe connector on the top of the camera and slide the camera out.

Each time you open the housing you should check the soft blue O-ring. This new type of O-ring is being used on all Sea & Sea products today and provides im-

SEA & SEA CX-600 SPECIFICATIONS

Weight.....	3.5 pounds
Dimensions	8.5 by 5.7 by 4.5 inches
Construction.....	Corrosion-resistant aluminum alloy with hard-almite galvanized pearl-white finish
Depth rating.....	200 feet
Price.....	\$1,595

proved protection against leaks and flooding. Make sure you use the special Sea & Sea grease that comes with the housing.

Since most serious underwater photographers use more than one lens in their quest for the ultimate photo, Sea & Sea offers four lens ports. They accommodate lenses from 14 to 100mm, including the 28-80mm zoom lens.

Other accessories include a focusing light holder, camera straps and an adapter ring that fits around the lens port. This ring can hold a focusing light or a small electronic flash in a variety of positions.

The best part of working with this housing is reduced preparation time. Most U/W photographers would agree you can spend as much time getting your gear ready as you do diving. The CX-600 requires a few minute's preparation. Open the housing, load film, check the O-ring, close the housing—you are ready to dive.

Sea & Sea is working hard to prove themselves a leader in the U/W photo marketplace with innovations. If your photo plans include a new housing, take a good look at the CX-600. With a suggested retail price of \$1,595, it's a winner.

For more information, contact Sea & Sea Underwater Photography, USA, 2105 Camino Vida Roble, Suite L, Carlsbad, CA 92009; (760) 929-1909, fax (760) 929-0098. 

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Dive Notes

NEKTON DIVING CRUISES ADDS NEW DESTINATION TO SOUTHERN BAHAMAS TRIPS: Nekton Diving Cruises has added Cat Island as a destination on its Southern Bahamas itinerary, which also visits San Salvador, Rum Cay and Conception Island.

When the wind blows from the north, the *Nekton Pilot* moors off the southern tip of Cat Island. Divers enjoy walls as well as shallow snorkeling sites. The tops of the walls begin at about 45 feet from the surface, then drop dramatically to more than 100 feet. There are high swim-throughs and enormous coral mountains. Guests see large groupers, sharks, rays and turtles—or, with any luck, a whale.

Cat Island itself is very beautiful, with high green cliffs. If you get a chance, the *Nekton* crew recommends snorkeling to



Bat Cave on Cat Island.

the island. The corals and fish are abundant and colorful, with gardens of anemones and Elkhorn Coral. There is also a cave filled with thousands of bats. You can snorkel into the cave to take a look around—but watch your head for falling debris! You'll also see stalagmites protruding from the cave floor.

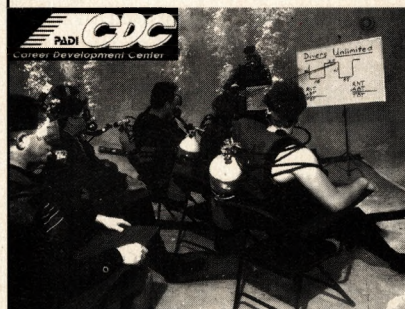
The *Nekton Pilot* cruises the Southern Bahamas from November through mid-April. Nekton Diving Cruises has two special offers on selected Southern Bahamas sailings this season. The low season special of only \$1,195 per week (including accommodations, meals and all snorkeling and diving activities) is offered on cruises departing December 6 and December 13, 1997. The second special offers free air fare from Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, to George Town, Great Exuma, for cruises departing in February and March 1998.

For further information, contact Nekton Diving Cruises at 520 SE 32nd Street, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33316; (800) 899-6753, (954) 463-9324 or fax (954) 463-8938.

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DIVER'S CALENDAR

Santa's Science Lab at Scripps

Children can enjoy a special brand of holiday fun **December 26 to 31** at the Birch Aquarium, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, La Jolla, California.

This hands-on family science program highlights how ocean and land animals survive and thrive in the harsh environments of the north and south pole. Santa's Science Lab is open 10:30 am to 4:30 pm.

Aquarium admission is \$7.50 for adults; \$6.50 seniors; \$5 for students with I.D.; \$4 for youths age 3 to 17; and children under three are free.

For information, call (619) 534-FISH.

Wrecks and Teks '98

The Boston Diving Show will present Wrecks and Teks '98 **February 14** at the Holiday Inn and Resort in Marlboro, Massachusetts. Bret Gilliam, noted technical diver, author, past president of NAUI and founder of Technical Diving Incorporated (TDI) will be the featured presenter. Tickets are \$10.

For more information, contact Fred Calhoun at Apple Ridge 2-6, Maynard, MA 01754 or call (508) 897-0877.

St. Petersburg Shell Club Annual Show

The St. Petersburg (Florida) Shell Club will hold its 51st annual Shell Show **February 27 to March 1** at the Treasure Island Community Center. The event will feature exhibits of marine and freshwater shells from around the world. Prizes of ribbons and rosettes will be given away.

For information, call (813) 381-7932 before the show begins; or (813) 363-9557 once the show is underway.

Beneath The Sea's Underwater Expo

Beneath The Sea's 22nd annual Undersea Exposition will be held **March 20 to 22** at the Meadowlands Exposition Center in Secaucus, New Jersey. The exposition will feature more than 300 exhibitors, 50 seminars, and demonstrations and workshops that will entertain both divers and nondivers. There will be a film festival featuring international explorer, Emory Kristof, as the host; he will be joined by noted underwater professionals Stan Waterman, Jack & Sue Drafahl and Bret Gilliam.

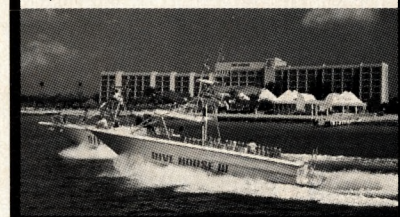
For information, visit the BTS Web site at www.cyberus.ca/~bts/, call (914) 664-4310, fax (914) 664-4315 or write to BTS, 495 New Rochelle Road, Bronxville, NY 10708.

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 - ★ Free airport/hotel transfers
 - ★ Free dinner at hotel
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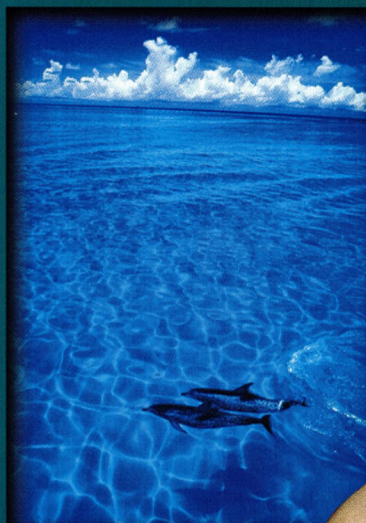
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UNDERWATER SYSTEMS

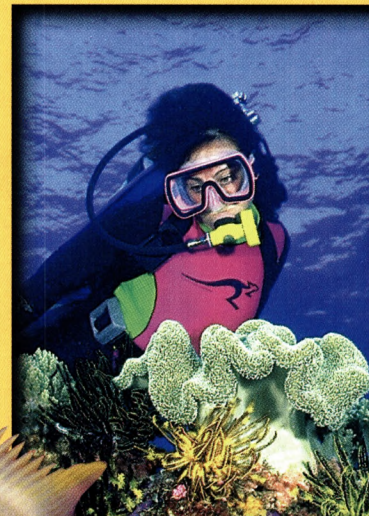
LIGHTING



DIRECTION



PHOTOGRAPHY



Ikelite has manufactured underwater lights, compasses and photographic equipment exclusively for the diving industry for over 35 years.

Our products are made in America and we are dedicated to service like nobody in the industry – *nobody*.

Ask your local dive shop.



Visit our website at <http://www.ikelite.com>

DIVE LIGHTS

PC Series

PC- Pocket C-Lites

Two lights that conveniently store in your BCD pocket for easy access. Both lights feature an innovative opening and sealing system with a snap-ring that permits the complete front assembly to be easily removed for quick and access to the batteries and lamp.



PC Lite Halogen

Equally suited as your main or backup light, the PC produces an incredibly bright penetrating spot beam. The PC is intended primarily for underwater use due to the heat produced by the high intensity lamp.

Size	2.5x6"
Batteries	4 alkaline C-cells
Beam	Concentrated spot
Depth Rating	300 ft (90m)
Intensity	7.5 watts
Lamp	Halogen 5.0V
Burn Time	3-4 hours

Mini-C & Maxi-C Fluorescents

Two lights in one and a true multipurpose lighting combination. Choose the Mini C-Lite or Maxi C-Lite with a fluorescent lamp built in. Fluorescents are ideal for pre-dive & post-dive activities & for uniform lighting of close objects underwater. Separate switches operate the halogen & fluorescent lamps.

Mini-C size	3x7"
Batteries	4 alkaline C-cells
Maxi-C size	4x8"
Intensity	5 watts
Burn Time	6 hrs halogen / 15 hrs fluorescent
Lamp	Halogen 5.2V & 6" fluorescent
Depth Rating	300 ft (90m)



Mini-C F fluorescent

Mini-C Lite

Mini C-Lite

The number one choice of experienced and novice divers for its reliability, small size and powerful beam. Ideal for day or night use.

Size	3x8"
Batteries	4 alkaline C-cells
Intensity	7.5 watts
Burn Time	3-4 hours
Lamp	Halogen 5.0V
Depth Rating	300 ft (90m)



Super C-Lite HR

Super C-Lite Series

High intensity alkaline models are unsurpassed in power to size ratio, ideal for day or night exploration. Ultra-bright rechargeable model for the professional or serious sport diver.

Super C-Lite Hx & Hc

Size	4x9" (10x23cm) "Hx"
	3x8" (7x20cm) "Hc"
Intensity	7.5 watts
Lamp	Halogen 7.2V
Batteries	6 alkaline C-cells
Burn Time	6 hours
Depth Rating	300 ft (90m)

Super C-Lite HR rechargeable

Size	4x9" (10x23cm)
Intensity	19 watts
Lamp	Halogen 6V
Batteries	2.5Ah ni-cad pack
Burn Time	1 hours
Depth Rating	300 ft (90m)

PCa Lite Halogen

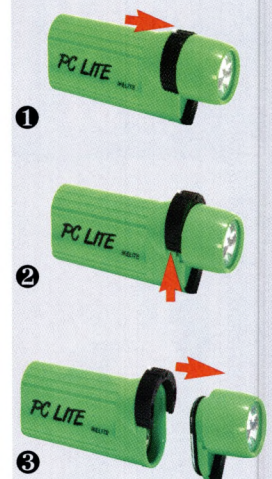
Extremely bright for its small size, the PCa is ideally suited as a compact backup light. Powered by six AA batteries, it produces an incredibly intense beam comparable to the PC Lite.

Size	2.5x4"
Batteries	6 alkaline AA cells
Beam	Concentrated spot
Depth Rating	300 ft (90m)
Intensity	7.2 watts
Lamp	Halogen 7.2V
Burn Time	2 hours



During the day a light will reveal the colorful marine life in dark crevices, holes, or under ledges.

Water conditions require different lights to optimize visibility.



Snap-Ring Design

PC-Lites unique snap-ring permits the complete front assembly to be easily removed for quick access to batteries and lamp.

Simply unlock ① and slide the snap ring up ② and remove the front ③. Reverse procedure to automatically seal the PC with ease and confidence.

Brightest in their class.

I K E L I T E

RCD Series

The revolutionary **Rear Clamp Design** of the RCD light guarantees easy opening and assures dependable resealing every time. You will never find the RCD stuck shut.



RCD Halogen

Features high intensity halogen lamp producing an incredibly bright penetrating beam.

Size 4x6" (10x15cm)
Intensity 7.5 watts
Lamp Halogen 5.0V
Batteries 4 alkaline D-cells
Burn Time 5-6 hours
Depth Rating 300 feet (90m)

RCD HR Rechargeable

Ultra-intense rechargeable light with 6 hour charger.

Size 4x6" (10x15cm)
Intensity 19 watts
Lamp Halogen 4.7V
Batteries 5.2V 4.5 Ah ni-cad
Burn Time 1.2 hours
Depth Rating 300 feet (90m)

NEW

RCD Super-8

An 8 cell version of the revolutionary RCD lite with guaranteed easy opening and resealing. Both pistol and lantern grip handles are included with each light.

Ultra-intense 14 watt light is the brightest in its class.

Size 4x8" (10x21cm)
Intensity 14 watts
Batteries 8 alkaline D-cells
Burn Time 5-6 hours
Weight in air 4.2 lbs
Depth Rating 300 feet (90m)



SpD Series

Specialty Divers find Ikelite's SpD series lights to be the ones of choice. The SpD rechargeable 12-volt ni-cad battery pack is contoured to fit a diver's tank or waist. It toggles in place in seconds and accepts one or two light heads. Battery pack approaches neutral buoyancy.

Both Aluminum SpD lite heads sport a handsome black anodized finish, rotating on/off switch, and 4.5' cable with protective covering.

The compact SpD-11 lite head features an incredibly intense 35-watt GE lamp and reflector combination. The larger SpD-AA lite head mates a 50-watt lamp with a custom designed adjustable focus reflector. Shrouded in protective



rubber, rotate the reflector to change from a broad flood beam to a concentrated spot beam. This same battery pack operates both the SpD lite heads and the Ikelite Pro Video Lite II head for unmatched versatility.

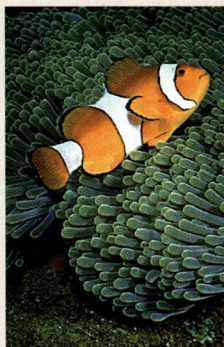
COMPASSES



Compasses

Follow the Leader! Ikelite introduced the rotating bezel compass design for divers in 1963. Our Pro series remains unsurpassed. Ikelite compasses are precision jeweled instruments that respond instantly and smoothly. The Pro is a top reading, low profile design with choice of wrist or hose mount. The Pro/S is a

top and side reading low profile design with choice of wrist or hose mount. Our Modular Compass System offers interchangeable top and side reading modules that can be mounted in a wrist holder or into many Oceanic, US Divers and Dacor consoles.



NEW

AQUASHOT 3 IKELITE

Aquashot 3

Never before has 35mm underwater photography been so simple, so inexpensive and so much fun. Start with a 35mm single-use Aquasnap, Kodak or Fuji camera, place it in an Aquashot 3 housing, aim, depress the shutter button, and the focus-free 35mm camera takes the picture. The results are sharp, colorful photos rivaling those taken by expensive underwater camera systems. The ultra-compact, lightweight Aquashot features an optical-grade glass lens, built-in hand grip, lanyard, accessory shoe, and sportsfinder for easy subject framing. Operates to 125 feet (38m).



Aquashot 3

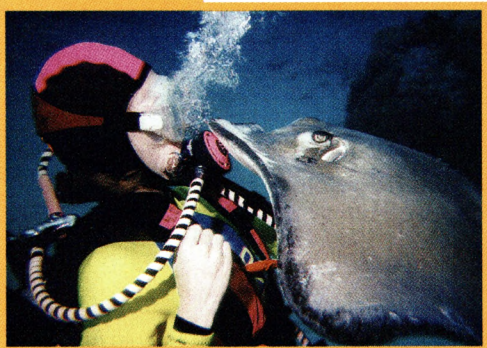
The Aquashot 3 has a new wind control for better film advancement. It also fits most all single-use cameras from the earliest versions to the latest versions.

SO simple
inexpensive
much fun



AquaSnap Camera — No need to worry where to buy cameras for the Aquashot 3 Housing. Ikelite offers a disposable camera for use above water or in the housing. The AquaSnap camera features built-in flash and 27-exposure film.

Mike Drake



Actual Aquashot Photos

Gek Lee Stevens



Aquashot Accessories

Water Correcting Lens — A lens which focuses the camera as close as 2 feet underwater for sharper, more colorful photographs.

Macro Kit — Macro lens focuses the camera at 8" for sharp, colorful, close-ups of small marine creatures. A removable wire framer shows the area being photographed.

Travel Bag — Durable nylon bag with shoulder strap and protective foam interior.

Substrobe AQ/S — Enhance your

Aquashot photos with the Substrobe AQ/S mounted away from the camera lens to help eliminate backscatter. Four AA batteries gives 500 flashes. (Flash version camera required).



SLR HOUSINGS

I K E L I T E

A Housing Isn'tsomething with "controls" that an amphibious or underwater camera doesn't have. An amphibious camera does not use magic to operate its functions, it uses shafts with seals that you can not

service or see if they are passing a drop of water. A clear housing may actually have fewer places to leak because it does not have all of the intricate window and lense seals. A housing does not need to be big or heavy, and the

buoyancy it provides can offset the weight of the camera underwater where an amphibious camera with accessories can be very heavy. Changing film between dives requires care that an

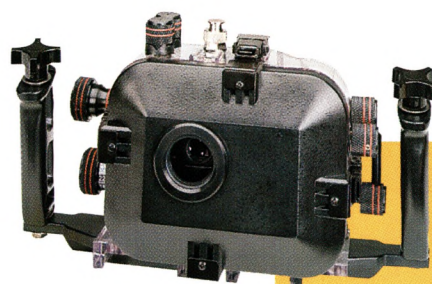
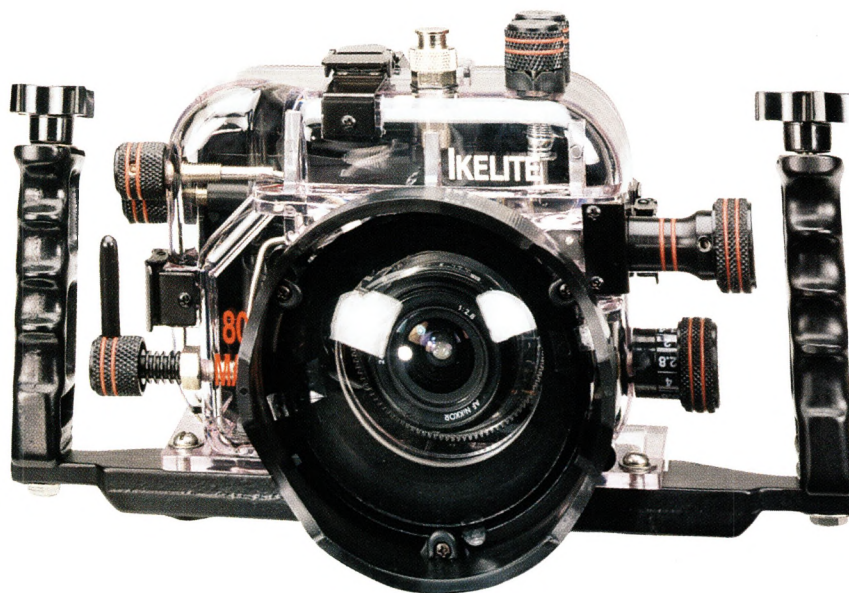
elusive drop of water will not get inside the camera mechanics. A housing yields a dry camera without any trapped moisture to affect the camera when changing film. And there is nothing complicated about closing and resealing a

housing. Ikelite has made underwater camera housings for over thirty years — housings that offer superb capabilities and usually outlast the camera. Ask your Dive Shop.



Ikelite
houses your favorite
camera —

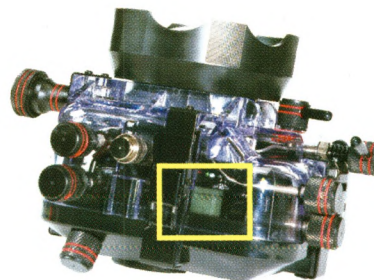
NIKON
CANON
MINOLTA
PENTAX



Many SLR-AF Cases now feature a contoured back with flush mounted window for improved thru-the-lens viewing, aluminum handles, new mounting tray and improved controls for easier reach and operation.

Auto Focus
TTL Exposure
Thru-the-Lens View
Motor Drive & Rewind
Super-Eye
Matrix Balanced Flash
Interchangeable Lenses
Wide Angle Lenses
Macro Lenses
Zoom Lenses

A simple glance through the clear housings assures the system is safe and allows a clear view of camera's LCD information panel and controls.



SLR-AF Cases

Choose the housing that affords full underwater use of the 35mm SLR-AF camera's versatile features and supports a full line of underwater photographic accessories. Choose a favorite camera — Nikon, Canon, Minolta or Pentax. A simple glance through any part of the clear housing assures the system is safe and allows a clear view of all the camera information and controls. Interchangeable port systems accept a full range of lenses from macro to ultra-wide angle. The light-weight housings are definitely a plus when transporting and are near-neutral buoyancy with the camera and tray. Injection molded from a high-strength polycarbonate, Ikelite SLR cases provide a safe working depth of 200 feet (60m).



Substrobes

IKELITE

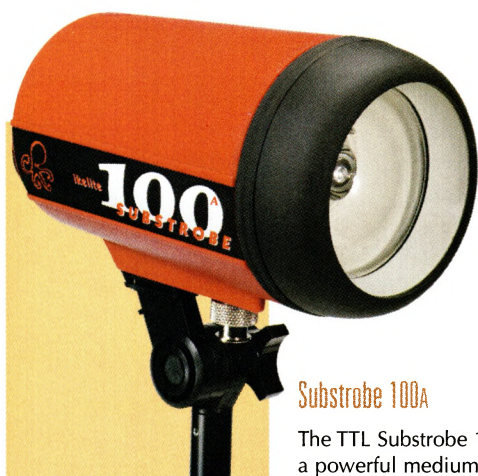
is the value leader in wide angle strobes



Substrobe 50 & 50s

The TTL Substrobe 50 is the most powerful and fastest recycling strobe in its price range. Its small size makes it ideal for macro photography, and its

power makes it ideal for use with lenses as wide as 28mm. The Substrobe 50 gives 200 flashes on 4 AA batteries and recycles in 3.2 seconds.



Substrobe 100a

The TTL Substrobe 100a is a powerful medium sized strobe with an adjustable angle of coverage. The strobes' coverage and output can be optimized to work with a full range of lenses without a diffuser. Dial in a narrow beam for more power for macro, dial out to cover wide angle lenses up to 15mm (94°) with just the right power for great balanced lighting. Add a built-in modeling light, soft-lite reflector, optional rechargeable batteries, multi-power settings and 4 second recycle times and it is no wonder these strobes are a favorite of serious underwater photographers.



Remote TTL Slave

Ikelite's Remote TTL Slave eliminates the need for a dual cord. Full TTL functions are provided via slave sensors so the slaved strobe has the freedom to be hand-held and maneuvered without the inconveniences of a long connecting cord.

Substrobe 200

The Substrobe 200 is a high performance professional strobe with reliability and features that revolutionize underwater photography. State-of-the-art electronics provide a blazing 200 watt sec. of power recycling in an incredible 1.6 seconds. Mount the SS 200 on either side of the camera and the control panel and ready light are always visible. The SS 200 features visual and audible ready signals, confirms TTL operation, covers 100°, eliminating the need for a diffuser, special soft-lite reflector producing softer, warmer more natural colors, built-in aiming light powerful enough for night diving light, industrial grade ni-cad rechargeable battery pack, strobe electronics sealed from battery compartment. No more



guessing about when to recharge; the SS 200 features an LED film gauge which shows how many rolls of film can be exposed with the remaining battery power.

With its reliability, features and price, the Substrobe 200 is quickly becoming #1



Substrobe 400

Recognized as the most powerful underwater strobe the Substrobe 400 produces an unprecedented 400 watt-sec. beam covering 110°. With this power, ultra-wide coverage, built-in modeling light, multi-power settings, soft-lite reflector, rechargeable batteries, and less than 4 second recycle times, it is no wonder these workhorses are a favorite of professional underwater photographers world-wide.

Ikelite Substrobes are designed and built in the U.S.A. and are covered by a 2 year warranty against electronic failure or leakage due to manufacturing.



Smart Charger

Features latest technology for better charge, keeps batteries cool for longer life, 100-240 volt.

NIKONOS ACCESSORIES



NEW



Rotating Tray for Nikonos V

Push the button to rotate the Nikonos V camera from vertical to horizontal format without changing strobe positioning.

The machined aluminum base plate provides attachment points for any

Ikelite strobe arm on either end, and each end is machined to accept dovetail mounts of TLC or Ultralite systems.

Design allows use of Ikelite Optical Viewfinder while camera removal for film change remains simple and fast.



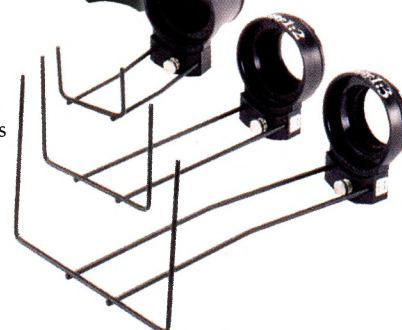
IKELITE

Optical Viewfinder

A fast accurate framing device which has interchangeable framer masks for 15mm, 20mm, 28mm, and 35mm lenses. A parallax correction dial is built in.

N5 Tray & Handle

Exclusively for Nikonos V. The compact design of the N5 Tray and Handle makes it an integral part of the camera. Velcro strap holds the Nikonos in your palm; relax your hand without losing the camera. Two strobe mounts for Ikelite arms are located underneath to reduce the width; tripod mount also featured. Rapid Advance lever included.



Extension Tubes

Lightweight and corrosion proof, made for the Nikonos 35mm lens, with reproduction ratios available for life size 1:1, one-half life size 1:2 and one-third life size 1:3.

Rapid Film Advance

A fast, easy film advancement for Nikonos V.

Arms

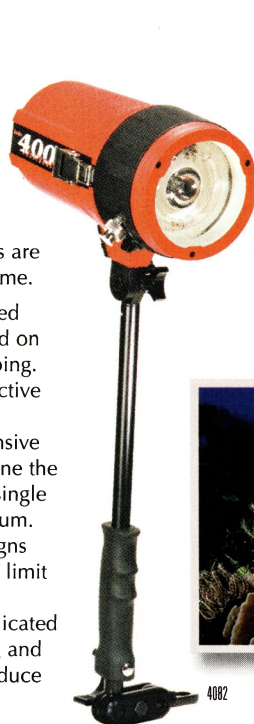
Ball Socket Mounting System

A larger ball diameter and thicker lock plates provide vastly greater holding power than similar systems. Add a comfortable handle with the ability to remove the arm at the push of a button and you have the new Ikelite Ball Socket Mounting System—the most versatile in the industry.

The clamp design is less likely to pinch fingers, does not fall off the ball end when loosened too far, and features a large diameter wing nut to assure easy tightening.

Multiple sections and various tubing lengths are easily added at any time.

The carefully machined ball ends are mounted on hollow aluminum tubing. This is more cost effective and is not as environmentally offensive as designs that machine the ball and arm from a single piece of solid aluminum. The single piece designs also place a practical limit on the ball diameter because of the complicated and costly machining and drilling of holes to reduce weight.



Video

I K E L I T E

Video Housings

Ikelite offers more underwater video housings than anyone in the world. A simple glance through any part of the clear housing assures the system is safe, and allows a clear view of all the camera information and controls. For added durability our clear housings are encased in aluminum shrouds. Ikelite mechanical controls offer several advantages, the leading one being dependability. Quite often multiple camera functions can be accessed by one mechanical control, giving the user a wider range of creative possibilities. Add to this, ease of use, wide angle lenses, Ikelite designed dome port, video-eye magnifier, UR/Pro color filter, and quick release base and the reason is clear why Ikelite is the number one choice in underwater video housings.



NEW

Digital Video Housings

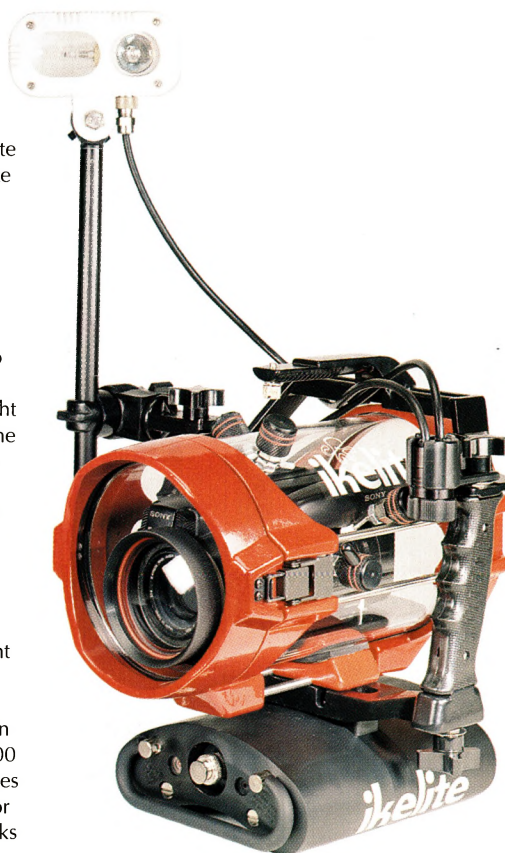
Sony & JVC



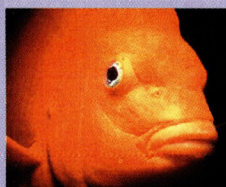
Video Lighting

Designed exclusively for Ikelite video cases, the Pro Video-Lite II offers an ultra-compact lite head with separate battery pack. The lite head incorporates 100 watt or 50 watt primary light with a 20 watt modeling light which is ideal for night diving. The Pro Video-Lite II has an unsurpassed 100° primary light coverage, free of hot-spots. The lite head and modeling light are finger-tip controlled from an in-line switch mounted on the handle.

A separate 12 volt rechargeable ni-cad battery pack snaps underneath the Ikelite video case for excellent weight distribution. The Pro Video Lite II's quick-release system mounts to a housing in seconds without tools. The 100 watt lamp burns for 35 minutes per charge and the 50 watt for 70 minutes. Dual battery packs can be stacked for extended burn times. Feature for feature, there is nothing like a Pro Video-Lite II.



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For additional information
contact your local dive shop or
send \$2 to Ikelite for a catalog.



Seven Gems, Seven Different Experiences

BY BONNIE J. CARDONE

SET IN A SAPPHIRE SEA, THESE ISLANDS AND RESORTS OFFER GREAT DIVING, MARVELOUS TOPSIDE ADVENTURES AND THERAPY FOR BODY AND SOUL

The Caribbean Sea is sprinkled with thousands of islands and thousands of wonderful dive sites. On the following pages you'll find seven different resorts/islands, each unique and special. We have christened them the Seven Jewels of the Caribbean; they offer an incredible variety of topside adventures, undersea excitement and body pampering amenities.

The first jewel is Anse Chastanet, on **St. Lucia**. The waters of this ver-

The second jewel is Blue Water Divers and the Salt Raker Inn, on **Grand Turk** in the Turks & Caicos Islands. The clear blue waters, squeaky clean white sand beaches and sunny, smog free skies shown in the photos are enough to make an editor (stuck inside, editing) throw away her pencil and flee—to the T & C Islands, of course.

The Water Island of **Dominica** is our third jewel. Also called the Adventure Island, it offers as much for the eco-traveler/diver above water as under. Dive, hike a volcano, soak in a hot spring or swim in a pool beneath a waterfall—the choice is yours.

Our fourth jewel is Scuba Club Cozumel on **Cozumel**, most definitely a divers' island. Almost everyone who comes here does so with the expectation of drifting through sapphire waters while viewing magnificent underwater scenery. Afterward there's great food and a festive South of the Border atmosphere.

Our fifth jewel is **Grenada** and LaSource Resort. If ever there was a place designed for the world weary, this is it. A refuge from stress, LaSource offers succor for body and soul. Of course you can dive, but you can also try a variety of other sports—on land and water—as well as experience body refreshing Oasis treatments.

Next to last but not least is **Tobago**, our sixth jewel, known for its drift dives and, at certain times of the year, encounters with Giant Manta Rays. This is the only place we know of that offers a drift diving certificate program.

The last of our Seven Jewels of the Caribbean is the **Dominican Republic**. This is a new territory for us, no one can remember the last time we did an article on this area. I think you'll be surprised at just how good the diving is and how much this country has to offer.

So many islands, so much to do and see, so little time. Life is short, enjoy the diving! 🐠

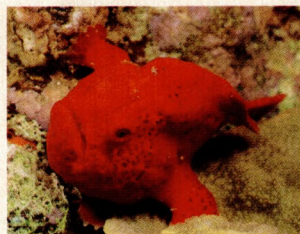
...the Seven Jewels...offer an incredible variety of topside adventures, undersea excitement and body pampering amenities.

dant, mountainous island are known for their collection of unusual and bizarre creatures, not commonly found elsewhere.

Anse Chastanet

ST. LUCIA'S EXCLUSIVE HIDEAWAY

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN FRINK



Above: A bright red frogfish braces itself on the reef with hand-like pectoral fins. Frogfish are able to match their backgrounds perfectly but this can take anywhere from hours to days. Below: An impressive view of the twin volcanic Pitons from a hillside room.

Location, location, location. This oft-quoted real estate cliché can be used to describe the fundamental attraction Anse Chastanet resort has for traveling divers. It is in the heart of St. Lucia's very best diving.

I discovered this in the early 1980s, not by staying at Anse Chastanet, but by staying at another resort. Each day we would load the dive boat and travel nearly two hours to sites along Soufriere Bay and the base of the Pitons. Often our boat would cruise by a gorgeous beach resort. I could see lovely rooms nestled among the trees on a verdant hillside and instantly coveted the convenience of a dive shop just steps from the water. I could see easy beach dives being made in front of the resort and wondered why I was not there.

Then one day we dived **Anse Chastanet Reef**. This site alone convinced me that when I next visited St. Lucia, I would be staying at Anse Chastanet. Just 10 yards beyond the water's edge, the reef's remarkable ecosystem offered an amazing profusion of unusual tropical marine life, all in 20 to 140 feet of calm, clear water. In

the shallows there were Atlantic Oval Squid; near the surface, myriad Silversides. On closer inspection, the true magic of the reef plateau was revealed. Graceful Spotted Drums executed their delicate pirouettes beside Brain Corals, Spotted Morays leered from crevices, angelfish and parrotfish grazed amid the coral canyons and frogfish and seahors-

es could be found amid the sponges and seafans. This was a fish and macro photographer's paradise. Despite the allure of the reef slope, with its impressive sponges and sheet corals, the marine life was so fascinating I never dropped below 30 feet.

True to my promise, I did go back to Anse Chastanet. In fact, I have visited several times since, most recently last September. The following are some of my impressions from that trip:

TRAVEL CONSIDERATIONS: Travel to St. Lucia is much easier now that the San Juan airport has become such an efficient hub to the Caribbean. I flew from Miami to San Juan aboard an American Airlines 757 (two and a half hours) and then connected via a 727 for the last one and a half hour leg to Hewanorra Airport. The flights were easy and hassle free. Once on the ground a representative of Anse Chastanet assisted with baggage and drove the scenic 1 hour 10 minute trip to the resort. I left Miami at 8:30 am and, by 4:00 pm, I was checked in to my room at Anse Chastanet.

ANSE CHASTANET: On St. Lucia's unspoiled southwestern shore, Anse Chastanet is nestled within a verdant 500 acre estate comprised of both lush mountain-side and pristine natural beach. Just a mile and a half from the picturesque town of Soufriere, with views encompassing both the blue Caribbean and the impressive twin Pitons, Anse Chastanet offers 49 unique rooms—37 scattered along the hillside, 12 along the beach. Amenities include two restaurants and bars, a tennis court, two boutiques and an in-house dive facility, Scuba St. Lucia.

On past visits to Anse Chastanet I've stayed in the hillside rooms. The views are nothing short of spectacular, with hills shrouded in greenery and an horizon dominated by the Pitons. No two rooms are exactly alike, yet each reflects the taste and talent of the owner, architect Nick Troubetzkoy. The original rooms are spacious octagonal whitewashed cottages and, farther up the hill, are deluxe suites characterized by immense space and wide





A lush growth of gorgonians clings to the flat surfaces of Lesleen M's wheelhouse.

open vistas. These are incredible accommodations yet, on this trip, I stayed down on the beach and found, for my needs, this was actually preferable.

There are 135 steps separating the beach from the hillside dining room and, of course, the rooms are farther up the hill beyond that. For most, this is not too significant. But for me, I always seem to be carrying a couple of cameras or going back to my room for a charged battery. The proximity between the beach rooms and the dive shop was a compelling convenience. And, since the beachside units are also very spacious and elegant, with open roof dormers, tile floors and a separate sitting room overlooking a gorgeous garden view, amenity deprivation was certainly never a consideration.

SCUBA ST. LUCIA: At the south end of the beach is Anse Chastanet's unique SSI Platinum Pro/PADI Scuba Diving Facility. Perfectly efficient for both beach and boat dives, Scuba St. Lucia offers guest gear storage; a small scuba boutique; three compressors; rental dive gear; and an underwater photo center offering camera rentals, instruction, custom videos and E-6 slide film processing.

Under the direction of Michael and Karyn Allard, Scuba St. Lucia became the first SSI Platinum facility in the Caribbean. This means they can certify from novice through instructor, plus offer numerous specialty courses. The reef just offshore is perfect for scuba instruction—calm, clear and loaded with fascinating things to observe. It's no wonder more

than 500 people have logged their first resort course dives here.

Whenever I visit Anse Chastanet I spend an inordinate amount of time diving the Anse Chastanet Reef, **Turtle Reef** and even the sand flat in front of the resort. They are very productive from a photographer's point of view, primarily because the unusual critters are commonplace. Peacock Flounders, lizardfish, seahorses, frogfish, Flying Gurnards, Peppermint Stick Lobsters, Snake Eels, Chain Morays, Viper Morays, Banded Morays, Conger Eels, squid, octopus and even Electric Rays could reasonably be photographed here during the course of a day and a night dive.

As good as their beach diving may be, excellent boat dives are found nearby as well. With a dive fleet that includes a pair of 43 foot V-hulled vessels and a single 34 foot dive boat, all equipped with twin outboards, the entire St. Lucia Marine Park is easily accessible. The farthest dives are probably the shipwrecks, the **Lesleen M** and the **Daini-Koyo Maru**, just 30 minutes away by boat. The **Lesleen M** was a 165 foot freighter sunk in October of 1986 in just 65 feet of water. She sits perfectly upright and has acquired an incredible cloak of sponges and gorgonians. Schools of Blackbar Soldierfish now reside within the superstructure. The 250 foot dredge **Daini-Koyo Maru** was intentionally sunk as a dive attraction in September of 1996 in 105 feet of water, landing on her starboard side. Sponges and fish have quickly settled onto this artificial reef, confirmation of St. Lucia's rich marine ecosystem.

Reef dives typically slope rather precipitously from about 30 feet and offer rich coral cover all the way down to 130 feet and beyond. Some sites, such as **Superman's Flight** at the base of Petit Piton Mountain, are quite vertical. Azure Vase and Yellow Tube Sponges are common and colorful crinoids seem to abound. Most of the fish are smaller species such as chromis, soldierfish, squirrelfish, drums, angelfish and wrasse, although sometimes schools of jacks can be sighted as well. Turtles are fairly common, but large reef dwellers and pelagics are not. The small creatures, macro life and coral cover are exquisite, however. Visibility ranges from 80 to 100 feet under optimal conditions but can drop to 20 feet or less with significant freshwater runoff from a driving rain.

If you are looking for an unusual dive destination with a strong component of romance, creature comforts, adventure and dive professionalism, Anse Chastanet should definitely be on your wish list. By the way, while you are there, make time to visit the terrestrial delights of this island, including nearby wonders such as the Sulphur Springs, Diamond Waterfall and mineral baths, the rain forest and, of course, a closer view of the twin volcanic spires known as the Pitons.

For further information or reservations regarding Anse Chastanet, call (888) GO-LUCIA or (954) 202-6245. To contact the resort direct, phone (758) 459-7000, fax (758) 459-7700 or e-mail ansechastanet@candw. The Web site can be found at www.ansechastanet.com.

Fun on Grand Turk

WITH BLUE WATER DIVERS
AND THE SALT RAKER INN

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY BILL HARRIGAN



TRAVEL

The principal route to Grand Turk in the past has been on American Airlines from Miami to Providenciales and then by inter-island airline to Grand Turk. Another possibility has been added with the advent of direct flights from Ft. Lauderdale to Grand Turk on Lynx Air International. Lynx Air operates a 19 passenger twin turboprop, with three weekly flights to Grand Turk.

U.S. citizens may enter with either a passport or a certified birth certificate and photo ID. U.S. dollars have been conveniently adopted as the official currency of the Turks & Caicos. The electricity is also the same as in the U.S.

Above: The Salt Raker Inn was once the house of a Bermudan shipwright. The inn has been lovingly restored and overlooks a soft white sand beach and the peaceful blue waters of Columbus Passage. All rooms have air-conditioning and satellite television.

By now Mitch Rolling, the owner of Blue Water Divers, must have friends all over the world. He's the kind of person who hits it off immediately with just about everyone, and he has taken a lot of people diving in Grand Turk since he started the operation in 1983. You feel as if you're on the water with a life-long diving buddy when you're out with Mitch, so people generally have a lot of fun with Blue Water Divers. Of course, the great visibility, the long, spectacular coral covered wall, abundant fish life and gorgeous white sand beaches of Grand Turk may have something to do with it, too.

BLUE WATER DIVERS: Flexibility is the watchword at Blue Water Divers. A choice of one or two tank trips is offered in the morning and another single tank dive is available in the afternoon. Night dives are added anytime four or more guests want to go. Sites are selected by a consensus of the divers, with suggestions by Mitch or divemaster Carl Bean. Two boats are used, so groups can be kept small and sent to different locations. Naturally, a full line of rental equipment is available, as well as dive instruction from resort courses through divemaster. Blue Water Divers also has a boutique with snorkel gear and a selection of T-

shirts featuring very nice artwork.

GRAND TURK DIVING: It is hard to imagine a more relaxed and inviting way to dive. Mitch picks you up directly from the beach, and you zip across the calm water to the wall, hardly more than a stone's throw away. The water temperature is around 84°F in the summer, which is perfect for bathing suits or Lycra skins, and 77°F in the winter, which requires a shorty or 3mm wetsuit for comfort.

The coral reef is about 35 feet deep along the top of the wall, with coral ridges and sand flats sloping gently into shallower water in one direction and only deep, deep blue in the other. The wall itself is alive with Star, Brain and Black Corals, Elephant Ear Sponges and hundreds of other creatures. Underwater visibility is usually 100 feet or better and Grand Turk has days that are stunningly clear.

Each of the individual dive sites has features that set it apart from the others. **Black Forest**, for instance, has four different species of delicate Black Coral formations. The Deep Water Seafans start in only 35 feet of water and get thicker at **Gorgonian Wall**. During the summer months, Manta Rays are frequently seen cruising along the wall. An undercut ledge at the **Library** harbors a swirling

ball of Glass Minnows and a small pack of curious Nassau Groupers. From deep on the wall to the shallow sections of the reef, there is much to explore at every site and Blue Water Divers does them all.

When the trade winds cooperate, Blue Water Divers also takes small groups of more adventurous divers to Salt Cay and South Caicos. The **Salt Cay** dives include the historic and fascinating wreck of the **Endemion**. Snorkeling and a beach picnic are also part of the fun on the Salt Cay day trip. The prime feature of **South Caicos** is the wall, which is deeper than that of Grand Turk, starting about 60 or 70 feet. The chances of seeing large animals such as Manta Rays and sharks are excellent.

SALT RAKER INN: Jenny Smith's Salt Raker Inn is one of the most relaxing island hideaways you can imagine. The cordially informal atmosphere around the Salt Raker makes you feel right at home. It was originally a 150 year old Bermudan shipwright's home, restored and expanded into the present inn. Sitting in one of the lounge chairs on the full length second story balcony, you can still enjoy the same sweeping vista of the beach and clear blue sea that captivated guests more than a century ago. Along with the outside structure the rooms have been renovated and now feature air-conditioning and satellite television. A small area for

Right: Blue Water Divers' new 24 foot Privateer, Dancin' Fool, on its way to a nearby dive site. Below: Mark Melrose follows a school of Glass Minnows beneath a ledge at the Library.

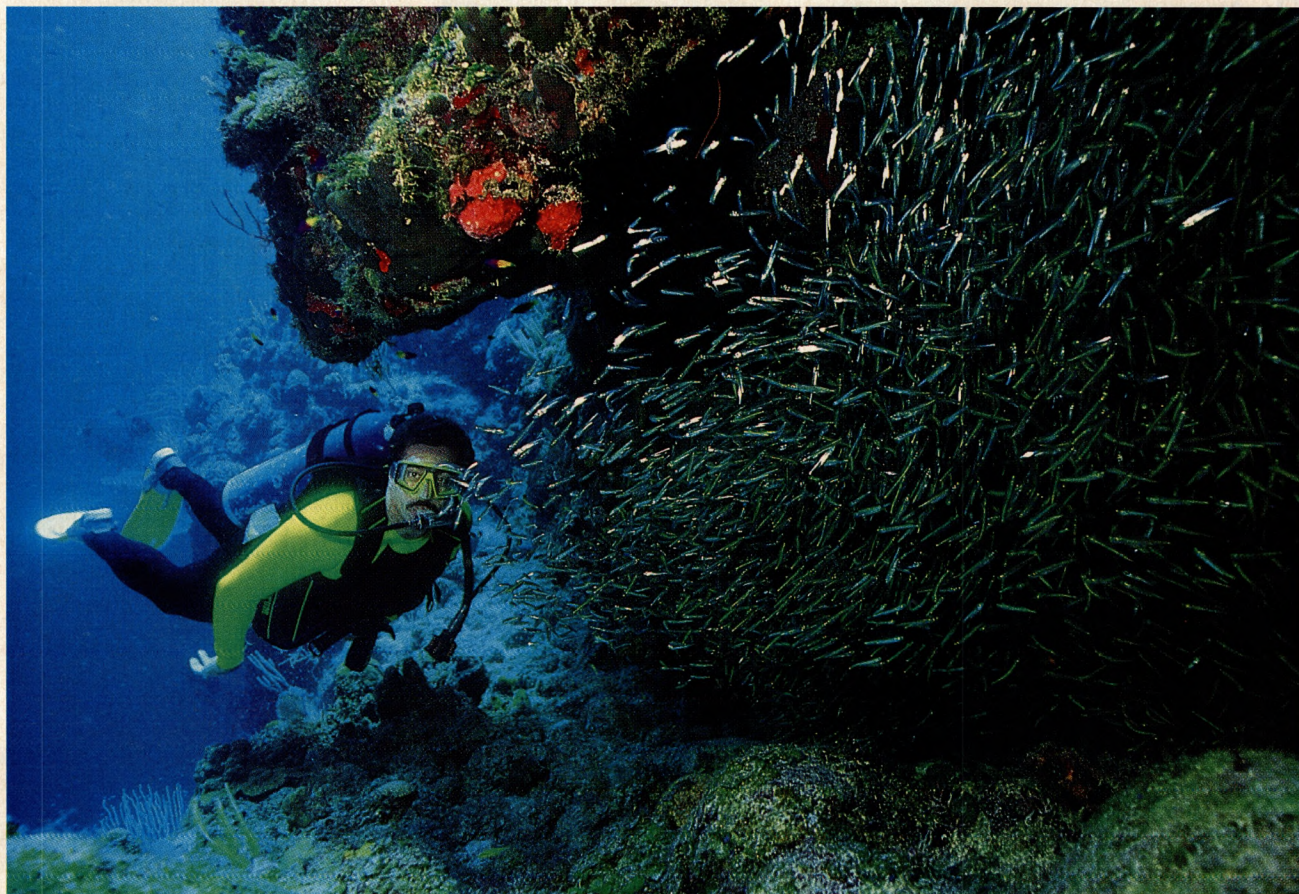


rinsing, drying and storing dive gear has been set up behind the building for the convenience of divers.

The Secret Garden Restaurant is in the grounds behind the Salt Raker Inn. Surrounded by lush tropical foliage, its name is appropriate. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are served here and the food and ambiance are good enough to make the Secret Garden a social center on Grand Turk. Once a week Mitch changes from dive operator to troubadour and brings a fine voice and guitar to the

Secret Garden for an evening of musical entertainment.

For more information or reservations, Blue Water Divers can be reached by e-mail at mrolling@caribsurf.com and by telephone or fax at (809) 946-2432. The address is P.O. Box 124, Grand Turk, Turks & Caicos Islands, British West Indies. The Salt Raker Inn can be reached by telephone at (809) 946-2260 or fax at (809) 946-2817. The address is P.O. Box 1, Grand Turk, Turks & Caicos Islands, British West Indies.



Dive
Dominica

QUEEN OF CARIBBEAN ECO-ADVENTURE

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL LAWRENCE

It's around 2:30, maybe 3:00 pm. I'm wrapped in a gauzy green haze—a spider-web of light and shadow shaped and formed by the sun filtering through the high canopy of Dominica's rain forest. A short 45 minute hike through the hills has brought me here, mere feet from the base of a magnificent waterfall. Middleham Falls towers a full 250 feet over me, a thin, strong stream of water flowing over the edge of the cliff, slowly etching a signature into the cliff's lip as it plummets to the first pool.

A thought comes to me. Just this morning, not even four hours ago, I was 70 feet

below the surface of Dominica's waters watching an entirely different sort of waterfall—a flow of Blackbar Soldierfish streaming down the junction of two plates of stone, a descending valley born of a violent volcanic upheaval. The huge school of fish created an underwater, biological waterfall that slowly dropped to a quiet pool of fish clustered in a shallow cavern.

This is the heart of the Dominica experience—an island where the adventure-some can experience some of the very best diving the southeast Caribbean has to offer, easily combining it with the purest oceanic rain forest experience available in this hemisphere. Dominica offers it all and delivers to those willing to go the distance. This is the pinnacle, the undisputed queen of eco-adventure in the Caribbean. The island of Dominica gives you experiences equal to the energy you give her.

I've traveled for the past decade and a half exploring and writing about the lost, the forgotten and the unknown corners of the Caribbean. In all these travels, I have never found an adventure island the equal of Dominica. For me, she stands at the very head of the class. This is the destination for the active diver, one who would prefer to spend the afternoon traipsing through the woods rather than lying by the swimming pool. There are towering waterfalls and calm pools, boiling lakes and cool streams, high hills, low valleys and everything in between. Land excursions range from an easy, ten minute stroll to a demanding, six hour hike (one way!).

Truly extraordinary diving is found very close at hand, sometimes immediately offshore but never more than a 30 minute ride away. Tunnels dripping with encrusting life and clogged with schools of fish lead to walls and pinnacles juxtaposed with rich shallow reefs. Seahorses, pipefish, frogfish and snake eels are some of the more common names on the guest list.

The primary architect of the Dominica experience is Derek Perryman, the first person to bring an organized, world standard dive operation to the island. He and his wife Ginette own and operate both Dive Dominica, the premier dive opera-



A diver delights in the intense competition for real estate on the reef at this crowded invertebrate extravaganza.

tion on the island, and Castle Comfort Dive Lodge, a 15 room bed and breakfast style hotel founded more than 30 years ago by Derek's mother, Dorothy Perryman. More than ten years ago, Derek's launch into the world of hosting the traveling diver altered the basic direction of the lodge but didn't disturb the primary principle of its home-spun hospitality. Though Ma Perryman passed away several years ago, the rooming house is run along the same lines and is given the same caring attention she always devoted to it. Castle Comfort lives up to its name. It is a family-run, dive-oriented, seaside lodge treating each and every person as if he/she was a guest in the family home.

In addition to a mouth-watering menu of dive sites, Dive Dominica also offers a complete list of land excursions utilizing the dependable and knowledgeable services of local guides who have been wandering these hills for years.

Check these potential combinations. You leave Castle Comfort's dock promptly at 9:00 am. Within 30 minutes you are 40 feet underwater, cruising through **Scott's Head Arch**, a lava tunnel gliding down from Cashacrou, Scott's Head, off the southern tip of the island. You slide over a floor carpeted with white Telestacean corals while gliding under a roof of Yellow Cup Corals and encrusting sponges. The schooling Blackbar Soldierfish and French Grunts part easily, allowing both passage and co-existence. Just outside the cavern is a flowing mass of coral that leads to the crowning edge of the caldera.

Your second dive? How about **Chamagne**, a submerged volcanic gas vent—a fumarole. Is that all? No! Check the shallow reef surrounding it for frogfish, seahorses, Flying Gurnards and a whole lot more.

At 1:00 pm, you are back at the dock. Take a break and grab some lunch (fresh fruit and veggies, local fish, sweet desserts) lovingly created by Castle Comfort cooks. After that, join Ken (of Ken's Hinterland Tours) or one of his colleagues in the minivan to launch your afternoon excursion. Middleham Falls is a half hour drive and a one hour hike. Sari-Sari Falls is about the same but down the valley instead of over the hills. Do you prefer a shorter excursion? Try Emerald Falls, amazingly gorgeous and just five minutes from the car. Are you slightly more adventuresome? Trafalgar Falls (you get two falls for the price of one) sits just 15 minutes off the road but still gives you extraordinary scenery and a maze of paths cutting between the twin falls named the Father (the taller) and the Mother (slightly shorter).

If you haven't guessed already, let me tell you, Dominica's diving is first rate. For those who do not know, here's the quick synopsis. Dominica's U/W terrain was created in two ways. Near the south end of the



Top: Dive Dominica's three speedy dive boats. **Above:** The Spotted Snake Eel (*Ophichthus ophis*) is found in the sand flats, most commonly in shallow water. **Left:** Castle Comfort Dive Lodge.

island, it was formed by the action of volcanic forces. At the extreme southern, a volcanic crater creates vertical walls that drop from lava pinnacles reaching to within five feet of the surface. Shallow, in-water areas have grown in a more traditional manner. Coral reefs coat the hard substrate and offer a rich variety of both invertebrate and vertebrate life. The tips of the islands offer true adventure—fast currents, big fish, edge diving.

Did I mention the whales? Dominica is well noted for Sperm Whales (one of the most stable populations in the Caribbean). Bottlenose, Spotted and Spinner Dolphins, False Orcas and at least a dozen other species are found on a regular basis. Can you get in the water with them? Unfortunately, you may not. Dominican law protects whales and dolphins from human incursion and any actions that may be interpreted as harassment. Dive Dominica does offer excellent, surface oriented whale watching excursions with hydrophones (underwater audio listening apparatus) allowing at least an auditory experience.

Land excursions? The sky's the limit. I've visited Dominica one-half dozen times and have barely scratched the surface. The Boiling Lake (one of the largest volcanic

pools in the world) remains unseen by my eyes, even though it is but a three hour hike. Morne Diablotin, the stronghold of the Dominican parrot (an endemic species) is six hours up a strenuous path. Not up to these trips? Try taking a slow boat down the Indian River or an easy stroll into Fort Shirley in Portsmouth on the north end of the island. Feeling particularly lazy? Just slide into one of Dominica's natural spas, volcanically fired hot pools strewn about the island.

I thoroughly enjoy Dominica and find the best way to appreciate and explore the island is through the facilities of Dive Dominica and Castle Comfort Dive Lodge. Castle Comfort is the kind of lodge you expect to find in the heartland of America. Dive Dominica is a world-class operation with superb vessels, friendly and professional staff, organized snorkeling to satisfy the nondiving traveler and a menu of dive sites that will leave you wishing you had booked two weeks instead of one.

For further information and/or bookings, call (888) 262-6611. The on-island number is (809) 448-2188; fax (809) 448-6088. The e-mail address is dive@tod.dm and the Web site is www.divedominica.com. 

COZUMEL

Jewels of the Caribbean

Scuba Club Cozumel

EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY BILL HARRIGAN

According to the Greek philosopher Heraclitus, "There is nothing permanent except change." Of course, some change is good and some isn't. When I heard Cozumel's Galapago Inn had been purchased by new owners and was now called Scuba Club Cozumel, I was curious about what changes might occur at one of the best dive resorts in the Caribbean. The Galapago Inn was known for its unpretentious diver-friendly atmosphere, and I hoped the new owners didn't plan any changes to the basic formula. I was able to go there recently and I'm happy to say the new Scuba Club Cozumel is every bit as good as the old Galapago Inn. All of the features and services that were so attractive to divers have been retained and a few very nice improvements have been added.

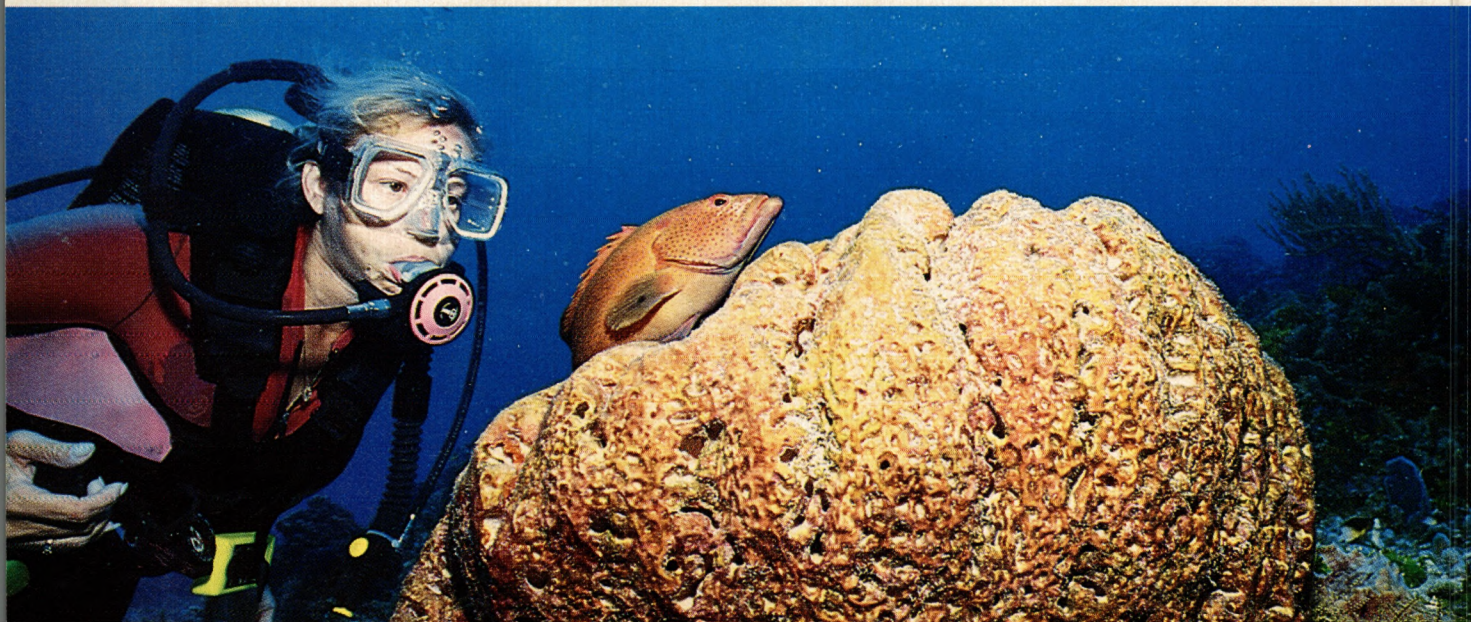
Scuba Club Cozumel operates on a unique plan called Room, Meals and Diving (RMD) that is an excellent deal. For one low rate, you get your room, a morning two tank boat trip, unlimited shore dives right off the property and three meals each day. This arrangement should not be confused with an all-inclusive plan, since it does not cover such things as bar bills and airport transfers. Standard packages of three, five and seven nights are available, but arrangements can be made for any length of stay.

Right on the water on the leeward side of Cozumel, Scuba Club's white-washed Spanish Colonial style buildings provide stunning views and convenient access to the waterfront. The rooms are spacious and welcoming, with cool tile floors, colorful linens and Mexican tile bathrooms. Air-conditioning and mini refrigerators are standard, along with huge, fluffy bath towels. Televisions and telephones are not installed in the rooms but both are available in the lobby area and downstairs restaurant. Each room has a balcony, with table and chairs and a built-in drying rack for wet-suits. BCs and other gear can be rinsed in large tubs and stowed in lockers on both sides of the property.

Both of Scuba Club's restaurants, the Fat Grouper and the Happy Pelican, feature water views and excellent food. Breakfast is buffetstyle in the Happy Pelican and fresh is the rule, from the hot food, such as bacon, eggs and French toast, to the chilled fruit bar. In addition to a full menu for the mid-day meal, a special Diver's Lunch can be ordered. This features selected Mexican and Maya recipes and is quickly available when the dive boats return. Dinners in the Fat Grouper are relaxed sit-down affairs with a choice of several entrées.

SCUBA COZUMEL: Diving services at the Scuba Club are provided by Scuba Co-

A Coney (*Epinephelus fulvus*), poised on a large Leathery Barrel Sponge, allows Pam Clogston to scrutinize its blue speckled back.



zumel, a PADI Five Star International Dive Center. All of the services you would expect are available, but there are some things about Scuba Cozumel that really stand out. Like the club itself, the dive center is immaculate and well-organized. Check out the compressors, the rental equipment or the classroom and you will find top quality equipment being maintained to an exceptionally high standard. The staff, from instructors to boat mates, are well trained, friendly and continuously attentive to your needs. Instruction is offered from introductory to the Instructor Development Course, including nearly all of the warm water specialty courses. The introductory courses in U/W photography and videography are a great way to get started and include all the necessary camera and editing equipment. Nitrox is now available at Scuba Cozumel, as is the PADI Enriched Air Nitrox certification course. Twilight dives are another new offering at Scuba Cozumel. This extra cost option provides a unique look at the reef's transition from day to night with a dusk dive on Palancar Reef followed by a night dive on **Tormentos Reef**.

CUSTOM DIVE BOATS: Scuba Cozumel's seven custom dive boats are all outfitted for maximum diver safety and convenience. The four largest are *Dive Cat* and *Reef Cat*, 48 foot catamarans, and *Reef Star* and *Reef Diver*, deep-V monohulls, 50 feet and 46 feet long respectively. All four are powered by dependable twin diesels. Standard features on each boat include two extra long dive ladders, multiple entry points, comfortable seating in or out of the sun and camera rinse barrels.

COZUMEL DIVING: Most of the diving is on the long stretch of reef included within the Palancar U/W National Park, which parallels the leeward shore of the island. Because the current tends to run alternately north and south, drift diving is the rule, even though the current is often quite mild. This makes for very relaxed diving, without the need to exert yourself or concentrate on navigation.

Visibility is generally outstanding, commonly reaching into the 100 to 150 foot range. Water temperatures in the summer peak at around 84°F and dip only to the mid 70s in the winter, so a thin tropical wetsuit is the most that's needed.

Scuba Cozumel covers all the sites from one end of the island to the other, so there is an interesting variety of dives available, in depths ranging from shallow to deep. Reef formations include mini-pinnacles, caverns, steep slopes and level bottoms. The principal reef builders are Star and Giant Star Corals, along with Smooth and Convolute Brain Corals. Of course, many other hard and soft corals are present, such as large fields of pinkish Finger *Porites* and golden brown searods. Much



Above: A wing of the Scuba Club Cozumel overlooks a beautifully landscaped courtyard that leads to the dive dock. **Left:**

Personalized service is guaranteed by the friendly dive staff.

Below: Scuba Cozumel's fleet of seven dive boats speeds guests to the dive sites.



of the visual impact of **Palancar Reef** is provided by the striking orange, purple and red of the many large sponges growing here. Both reef and pelagic fish species are abundant, benefiting from the designation of the entire reef area as a National Underwater Park.

In addition to the many dive sites accessible by boat, the shore diving area directly off the club is very popular. Several concrete structures have been added to the rocky outcroppings that speckle the sand bottom, attracting a large variety of small fish and invertebrates. The procedure here is simple: just check out as many full tanks as you want and slip into the water with your buddy. A float line excludes other boats from the area and two ladders provide easy access.

FREQUENT GUEST CLUB: The Scuba Club has always attracted an extraordinarily large percentage of repeat guests and a new program has been adopted to reward their loyalty. After the second stay, guests qualify as Frequent Guests, an exclusive club that carries unpublished discounts on all expenses. Frequent Guests are is-

sued membership cards entitling them to discounts for RMD packages, bar bills, extra diving services and shopping at the dive store and gift shop. If you don't qualify for Frequent Guest membership, substantial savings are still available through the Scuba Club's Book Early and Save promotion. This plan provides special discounts to divers and groups who make confirmed reservations in advance.

TRAVEL INFORMATION: Nonstop flights to Cozumel are provided from several U.S. cities by several airlines, along with numerous flights via Cancun. U.S. citizens may enter with either a passport or a certified birth certificate and photo ID. Pesos are the official currency but dollars seem to be accepted everywhere. The electricity is 110 volts/60 cycles, so no transformers or adapters are needed.

For more information, call Aqua-Sub Tours in the U.S. and Canada at (800) 847-5708, or contact your local dive shop, travel agency or dive travel specialist. Scuba Club Cozumel can also be found on the Internet at **www.scubaclubcozumel.com**.

LaSource

GRENADA'S DIVE AND REVIVE RESORT

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY BILL HARRIGAN

Ready for a vacation that can reset your stress level to zero? Send your body to LaSource in Grenada for a week. Let them massage your tired muscles, revitalize your skin and delight your palate. Borrow your body back occasionally for some excellent diving and then put it out to pasture on the beach. Or, try one of the other activities, such as sailing, tennis or waterskiing. Whether you are dining, diving or relaxing, pampering is the prime directive at LaSource.

LA SOURCE DIVE CENTER: Neil Fishburne manages LaSource Dive Center, where the high degree of personal service is in keeping with the rest of the resort. Fiona Fishburne and Paul Holop are also staff instructors.

LaSource uses a fiberglass 32 foot version of the island pirogue as a dive boat. As with most dive operations on Grenada, boarding is right off the beach in front of the hotel. The slope of the beach here actually means a short swim, which is not a hardship considering the warmth and clarity of the water.

All dives and dive equipment are included in the price of your stay at LaSource, the only exception is certification courses such as open water and ad-

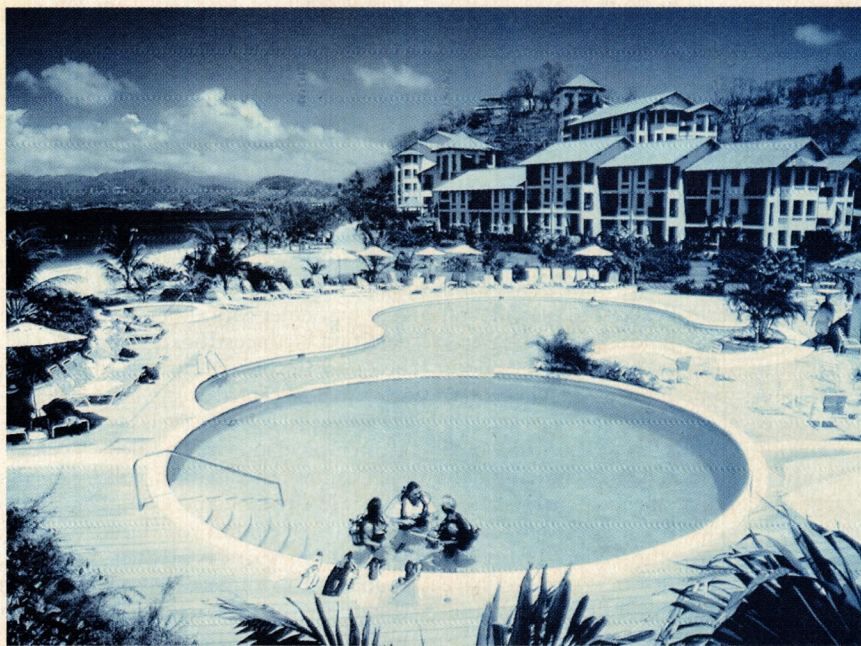
vanced diver. Two dives are scheduled each day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. A night dive is also arranged once a week. Dive buddies can make dives off the beach at any time, simply by arranging for tanks in advance.

DIVING GRENADA: Most of the dive sites off Grenada are along the calm leeward side of the island, providing easy access without rough seas or strong currents. A shallow shelf runs close to shore in many areas, with excellent coral development. Visibility along this coast varies considerably with the prevailing weather conditions, usually ranging from 50 to 100 feet. For these sites, the profile consists of a shallow reef sloping very gently to a break point in about 35 feet of water. The reef changes from coral mounds and sandy patches at the top to coral ridges and narrow, sandy channels near the edge. At the lip, the reef often drops vertically in a wall that runs down to 70 feet or so before leveling out in a sand bottom with coral patches. The wall has fissures and overhangs packed with corals and sponges that attract many species of reef fish. Pillar Coral is plentiful in places, especially at a dive site called **Happy Hill**. At other reefs such as **Tropicana**, vast fields of finger-like *Porites* Coral and overlapping mounds of Star Coral are accented by the multiple green barrels of tube sponges.

In addition to the reef sites in this area, LaSource divers can also visit several shallow to moderately deep wrecks. The **Buccaneer** is the remains of a 60 foot schooner that rests in about 75 feet off **Molinaire Reef**. Almost completely coated with sponges and encrusting coral, the *Buccaneer* has been reduced to hull and deck supports. The **Quarter Wreck** is one piece of a ship that had been cut into four sections for use as an artificial reef. This particular piece, the stern section, fell off somewhat prematurely and rests on a shallow portion of a low profile coral reef. This part of the hull is still intact, with the engine and rudder in place. The **Veronica** is an inter-island freighter that sank in 1993 while at anchor outside St. George's harbor. The vessel sits upright in 45 feet of water and is becoming more thickly encrusted with sponges and corals each year.

LaSource makes periodic trips farther

Below: A resort scuba class takes place in the pool area of LaSource.



north to dive the fabulous waters between Grenada and Carriacou, a neighboring island that is also part of Grenada. Diving conditions can be more boisterous here, with stronger currents and choppier seas, but the payoff is worth it. This is the zone of blue water and big fish, with coral covered volcanic ridges and pinnacles. Dive sites such as **Face of the Devil**, the **Gallery** and the **Sisters** provide nonstop action. Check in advance and reserve a spot early if one of these trips is planned.

The **Bianca C.**, one of the best wreck dives in the Caribbean, is directly off LaSource beach. This 600 foot Italian luxury liner sank in 1961 in 170 feet of water. The disaster began with a boiler explosion and subsequent fire while the ship was in St. George's harbor. As the fire spread, an attempt was made to tow the vessel out to sea to avoid having the harbor blocked in case the fire was not contained. Unfor-

tunately, the ship was not moved far before it broke the tow and sank. The main deck is now about 90 feet deep and the hull is thick with a pink haze of delicate Black Corals. The depth and frequent presence of strong currents make this an advanced dive.

LA SOURCE: Life at LaSource is intended to refresh the mind and body. The daily routine for most guests is organized around one of the Oasis treatments. Eight are offered, with appointments for the 20 to 50 minute sessions made as desired by each guest. All of the Oasis treatments are for either men or women, except the couples massage therapy, which is designed to show couples the secrets of neck, back and shoulder massage. In the hair treatment, a seaweed paste is used to condition the hair and scalp. A combination of six cleansers, oils and creams are used in the facial treatment to clean and revitalize the

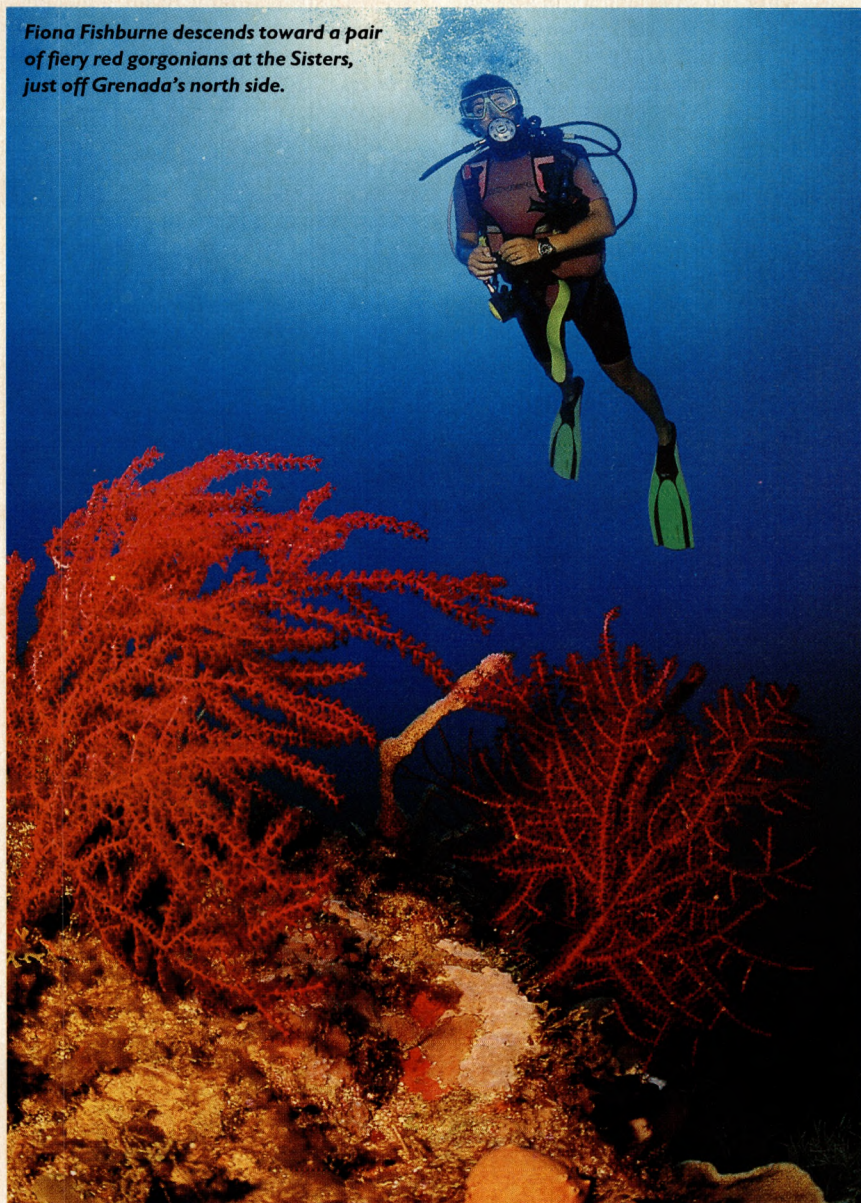
skin. For the body there are two different types of massage treatment, aromatherapy, in which a choice of fragrant oils is used, and the salt and oil loofah rub that exfoliates the skin and promotes a remarkably fresh feeling. Feet are not overlooked at LaSource, one Oasis treatment is dedicated to a special foot massage. In addition to the Oasis treatments, a variety of facial, hair and nail beauty treatments are available at extra charge.

Breakfast and lunch are served buffet-style and the service hours are long enough that they can be taken at your leisure. Dinner is a more formal sit-down affair with a variety of entrées. Wine stewards circulate continuously during dinner with a selection of wines.

The rooms and suites at LaSource have been designed to provide the best possible view of the beach and the Caribbean Sea beyond. Furnished in rich, dark wood with a king sized fourposter bed on a light marble floor, the rooms are restful and inviting. The bathrooms are large and luxurious. All rooms are fully air-conditioned but guests frequently just open the French doors to the balcony and let the soft sea breezes drift in. Since LaSource is intended to be a relaxing getaway, there are no television sets in the rooms.

LaSource is an all-inclusive resort, including airport transfers and tips. The

Fiona Fishburne descends toward a pair of fiery red gorgonians at the Sisters, just off Grenada's north side.



TRAVEL INFORMATION

Several major air carriers provide service to Grenada, direct or via San Juan, Puerto Rico. U.S. citizens may enter the country with either a passport or a certified birth certificate and photo ID.

The Eastern Caribbean (EC) dollar is Grenada's official currency. Dollars are also accepted nearly everywhere but be prepared to accept your change in EC.

Electricity is 230 volts/50 cycles, so adapters and transformers will be needed. These are available at the desk but plan on bringing your own if you need them regularly.

There is a hair dryer provided in each room.

The dress standard is casual, although guests tend to dress up somewhat for dinner, with at least long trousers and collared shirts for men.

combination of Oasis treatments, spacious beachfront grounds and variety of other sports offered make it a good choice for couples containing only one diver.

For more information, contact LaSource in the United States at (800) 544-2883. From other locations call (809) 444-2556. E-mail should be addressed to lasource@caribsurf.com. Additional information can also be obtained from the LaSource Web site at www.lasourcegrenada.com.

TOBAGO

Jewels of the Caribbean

Tobago's Drift Dives

EXPERIENCE THE DRAMA

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY WALT STEARNS

Of the many assorted jewels in the Caribbean, the tiny island of Tobago is a true diamond in the rough. Free of large scale industrialization (unlike its larger sister Trinidad), Tobago lolls in an intrinsic grace and beauty.

Roughly 116 square miles in size, the island's densely forested mountains and valleys are reminiscent of islands I have visited in the Indo-Pacific. Like its people, Tobago is warm. The air temperature averages 84 to 86°F in the summer, occasionally dipping into the mid 70s in winter. Light, casual dress is customary.

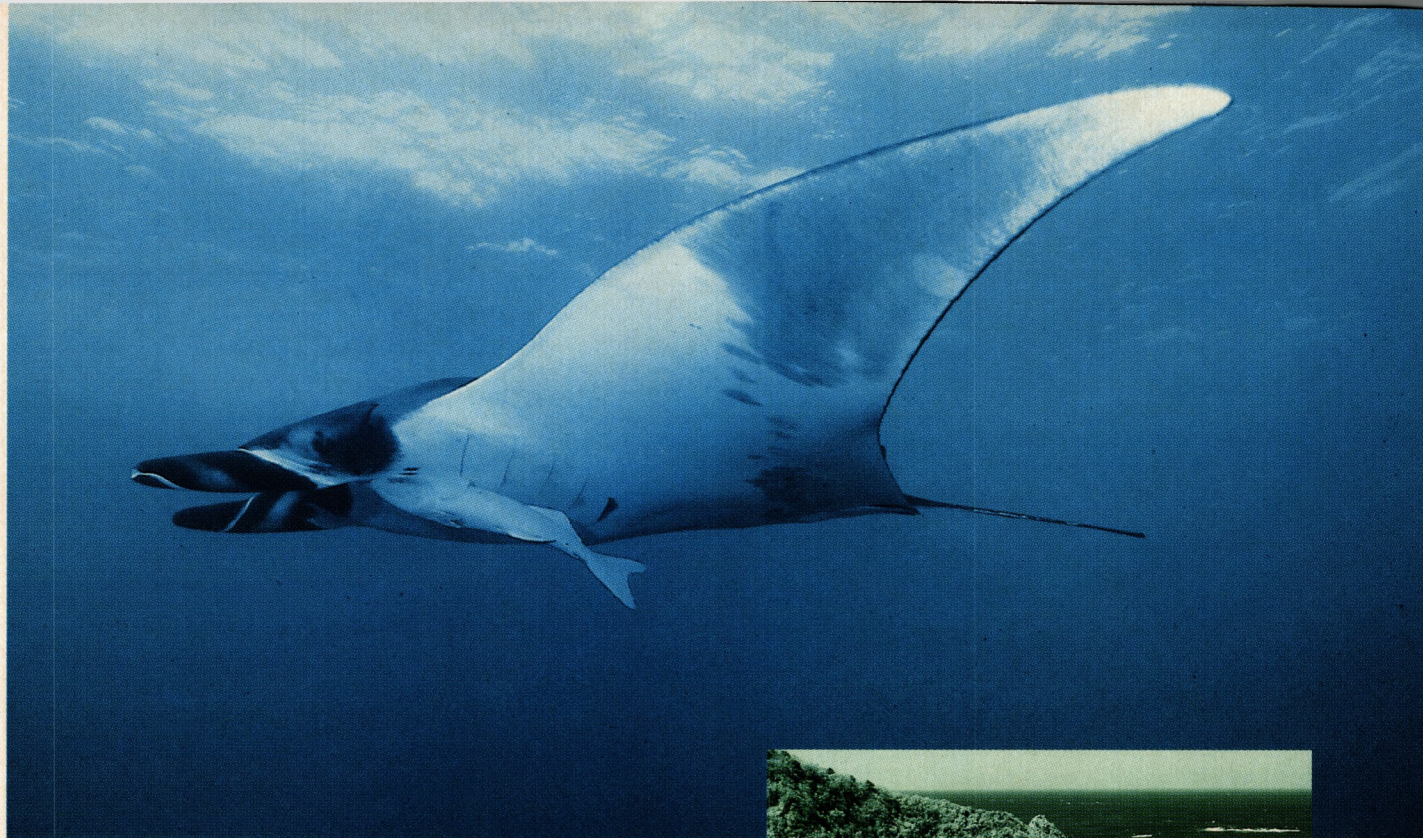
The sedate physical beauty typical topside gives way to a raw, almost untamed quality underwater. This is most notable

around the island's eastern half, where a convoluted stretch of shoreline is ruled by small bays and steep hillsides of volcanic rock that break the surface of the sea. The bottom drops quickly to 100 feet or more around Tobago's small satellite islands and rocky outcroppings. Below the surface is a visually striking realm, full of pinacles, peaks, cascading slopes and mini-walls laden with myriad soft corals and sponges.

Of course, what would any reef be like without abundant fish life, such as schools of Brown Chromis and Creole Wrasses, swarming from below to feed on the plankton in the upper water column? Mixed within their ranks are Black Durgons, Bogas, small Black Jacks and



This giant Barrel Sponge has been twisted into odd and playful shapes by Tobago's constant currents.



Rainbow Runners. In addition to these large concentrations of common finny denizens are large Tarpon, Barracuda, mackerel, tuna, turtles and, occasionally, sharks and Manta Rays.

Atlantic Manta Rays (*Manta birostris*) are rare throughout the rest of the Caribbean and The Bahamas but Tobago has a reputation for face to face meetings

Above: Elusive and sleekly elegant Manta Rays occasionally visit divers from late April to September. **Right:** This sheltered cove presents a perfect picture of Caribbean idyll.



TRAVEL MISCELLANY

Following American Airlines' recent expansion of services throughout the Caribbean, there is now a regular schedule of flights from both New York and Miami International to San Juan, Puerto Rico. From San Juan, American Eagle provides daily, direct flights to Tobago. Entry into Tobago requires a valid passport as well as a return ticket. Departure taxes and security fees total \$85 TT (\$15 U.S.) and are collected at the airport. On island, U.S. currency and most major credit cards are widely accepted. Cab fare to Speyside typically runs about \$35 U.S.; rental cars are also available.

with them. However, even during their peak season, between late April and September, an encounter is still a matter of chance.

Tobago's position in the extreme lower, southeastern corner of the Caribbean, below the semi-curved island chain of the Lesser Antilles, is responsible for its profusion of marine life. Along with its larger sister island, Trinidad, to the south, Tobago is part of the South American con-

tinental shelf, 70 miles off the eastern coast of Venezuela. The island sits in the pathway of the North Equatorial Current (the prelude to the Gulf Stream, which begins in the lower Caribbean) from the open Atlantic and the Guyana Current, which follows the contours of South America's eastern coast. The latter current brings with it some of the nutrient rich waters of the Orinoco River. As these bodies of waters collide and intermingle, they generate a rich ecosystem for the vigorous sponge, coral and fish communities.

Currents are common here, ranging anywhere from a leisurely one-quarter knot to swifter two to three knots. This has a profound effect on some of its sponge colonies; Giant Barrel Sponges in particular are sculpted into bizarre, convoluted shapes.

NO TYPICAL CARIBBEAN DIVE

Tobago's greatest collection of rock islands and pinnacles ranges between a spot west of the village of Charlotteville in Man-of-War Bay, on the north side, past the is-

land's eastern tip to the Batteaux Bay community of Speyside. Nowhere else in the Caribbean can you find a collection with this magnitude of huge volcanic spires rising from the depths to break the surface.

Starting on the north side are two prominent rock formations, the **Sisters** and the St. Giles Islands. A little more than a mile offshore, to the west of Charlotteville, the Sisters feature a collection of 50 foot high, round, fat columns of bare rock. Below the surface, their contours are marked by deep clefts and caves. They drop almost straight down to depths of 70 to 80 feet in several places before becoming a steep incline. Midway down, the rocks become a haven for forests of large Black Coral trees and gorgonians.

Closer to shore, the **Brothers** are a slightly shorter mirror image of the Sisters, with a maximum depth of 75 feet. When the surge is moderate, divers can take a winding path between these stone behemoths, disappearing in the thick schools of baitfish and aerated water, churned from the waves breaking on the rocks overhead.

TOBAGO'S DRIFT DIVES

East of Charlotteville, off Tobago's most northern point, the **St. Giles Islands** stand like lone sentinels. Home to the largest frigate bird rookery in the Caribbean and a natural rock arch formation called London Bridge, the underwater seascape is equally dramatic, with walls and steep slopes marked by deep clefts covered with corals and sponges.

Owing to their location in the open waters of the Atlantic, most of these summits have great concentrations of Brown Chromis, Creole Wrasse, assorted species of jacks, including Black, Bar and Crevalle, Rainbow Runners and a few Tarpon. Pelagic visitors, such as tuna, Wahoo and billfish (both sailfish and marlin), are also encountered here from time to time.

On the south of the island near Speyside, four large volcanic spires surround Goat and Little Tobago Islands. They are similar to the Sisters and the St. Giles Islands but are smaller. Identified by their shorter rock formations protruding above the water, **Sleeper, Bookends, Special and Shark Bank** drop steeply at 60 degree angles to 110-145 feet before reaching a sandy plain at the bottom. When large swells roll in from the open sea, the tops are awash with seafoam and aerated water. Depending on the intensity of the surge, divers can often find several large Tarpon hanging below the white cloud formed by the aerated water or midway down the pinnacle's slope.

DIVING SPEYSIDE

In addition to the four pinnacles surrounding both Goat and Little Tobago Island, the entire region facing the small Batteaux Bay community of Speyside, marks the heart of Tobago's finest dive sites.

Decorating the contours of these two little islands, which drop at steep angles to as great as 140 feet, are flourishing octocorals of every kind, such as searods, sea-plumes and Deep Water Seafans. Their dark chocolate hues are intermixed with tube sponges in yellow, orange and purple. Like serpents sprouting from Medusa's head, long winding rope sponges in deep red, purple, green and lavender are in sharp contrast to the numerous bright Orange Elephant Ear Sponges.

TOBAGO'S DRIFT CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

The unique and adventurous nature of Tobago's great drift dives has launched a new Drift Certificate Program, sponsored by the island's dive operators and the Tobago Department of Tourism (TID-

CO). Upon completion of the program, divers are presented with a specially printed and signed document (on decorative parchment-type paper, suitable for framing). To obtain this absolutely free certificate, divers need only complete at least eight of Tobago's drifts—a rather easy thing to do, even in a few days.

Black Jack Hole is a good choice for a starting point. Similar to most sites in this region, it is dominated by incredibly thick sponges and soft corals, as well as giant Brain Corals (seven to eight feet across) covering a steep grade starting in

couple hundred feet. When the wall turns slightly outward you're at **Manta City**, named for its frequent Manta Ray sightings when the season is in full swing. Here, the reef's bottom changes to a steep slope from a maximum depth of 75 feet to its upper plateau 12 feet from the surface. From the beginning of Keleston Drain to this point is roughly 360 yards. When the current is ripping, a diver could easily cover that distance in 40 minutes.

The secret behind enjoying each site's thrilling spectacle is to go with the flow and let the current do the work. In addition to carrying a whistle on your buoyancy compensator, I recommend carrying a secondary emergency signaling device such as an inflatable signaling device and/or a Dive-Alert.

Little Tobago's shorefront reef is a prominent, 300 yard stretch of sloping drop-off running parallel to its western shore. Named **Cathedral**, this reef takes over where Manta City leaves off, going from 30 feet to a maximum of 80 feet in the sand, the 60 to 80 degree angle creating a mini-wall of sorts. Although not as dense with small fish life, the site is rich with sponge and soft coral growth.

Tobago offers diving year-round. Water temperatures generally average in the low 80s (°F) with visibility customarily from 70 to 90 feet. The only time of concern is when the Orinoco River in Venezuela reaches its height during the rainy season (July through September), pushing the fringing edge of this mighty tributary all the way up to Tobago's southern coast. When this occurs, expect visibilities of 30 to 40 feet, primarily in the top 40 feet of water.

For diving, the boat most favored by Tobago dive operations is the *pirogue*, an elongated rowboat typically 28 to 36 feet in length, with a high, sharp entry at the bow, a deep rounded bottom and low freeboard midship. When it comes to comfortable handling over large oceanic swells and choppy seas, this French Creole longboat is one of the best for the job.

A NEW WRECK

Making sure Tobago has all its bases covered as a diving destination, TIDCO and the Tobago Dive Operators Association created a new wreck site this year. Measuring 350 feet in length, the former trans-island ferry, the **Scarlet Ibis** lies on an even keel at a depth of 100 feet, with her superstructure coming within 56 feet of the surface. The entrance to this massive vessel's car loading deck at 83 feet looks like the opening to the Holland Tunnel. In Tobago's nutrient rich waters the *Scarlet Ibis* is sure to develop some pretty spectacular plumage and I am sure I'll be coming back to see it. 🐠

TOBAGO DIVE CENTERS

Aqua Marine Dive Limited

Blue Waters Inn

(800) 742-4276

(809) 660-4341

(809) 660-5195 (fax)

Tobago Dive Experience

Manta Lodge

(800) 544-7631

(809) 660-5268

(809) 660-5030 (fax)

Crown Point

(809) 639-7034 (tel/fax)

Dive Tobago

(809) 639-0202

(809) 639-7275 or 2727 (fax)

Man Friday Diving

(800) 525-6896

(809) 660-4676 (fax)

R&C Diver's Den

(809) 639-8120 (tel/fax)

Tobago Dive Masters

(809) 639-4697 (tel/fax)

Tobago Marine Sports

(809) 639-6556

15 foot shallows and dropping to 120 feet. Drifting in a westerly direction, divers come to **Keleston Drain**, on the edge of a 50 foot deep reef flat.

Divers then cover a distance of 100 yards before encountering a large plateau with a slight slope rising from 60 feet to roughly 25. Along the way, numbers of adult Queen Angelfish are visible. It is almost routine to see groups of three to five grazing together in the corals. At 45 feet, midway along the gentle slope, is the largest single specimen of Boulder Brain Coral (*Colpophyllia natans*) ever recorded in the West Indies, measuring a staggering 12 by 16 feet across with a profile of 8 feet.

Beyond this magnificent coral, the reef switches back into a mini wall that starts at 35 feet and drops to a sandfloor at 80. Fringing the top of the wall is **Yellow Brick Road**, named for the conglomeration of one to two foot Yellow Tube Sponges (*Aplysina fistularis*) that spans a

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Jewels of the Caribbean

The Dominican Republic

THE CARIBBEAN'S BEST KEPT SECRET

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY WALT STEARNS

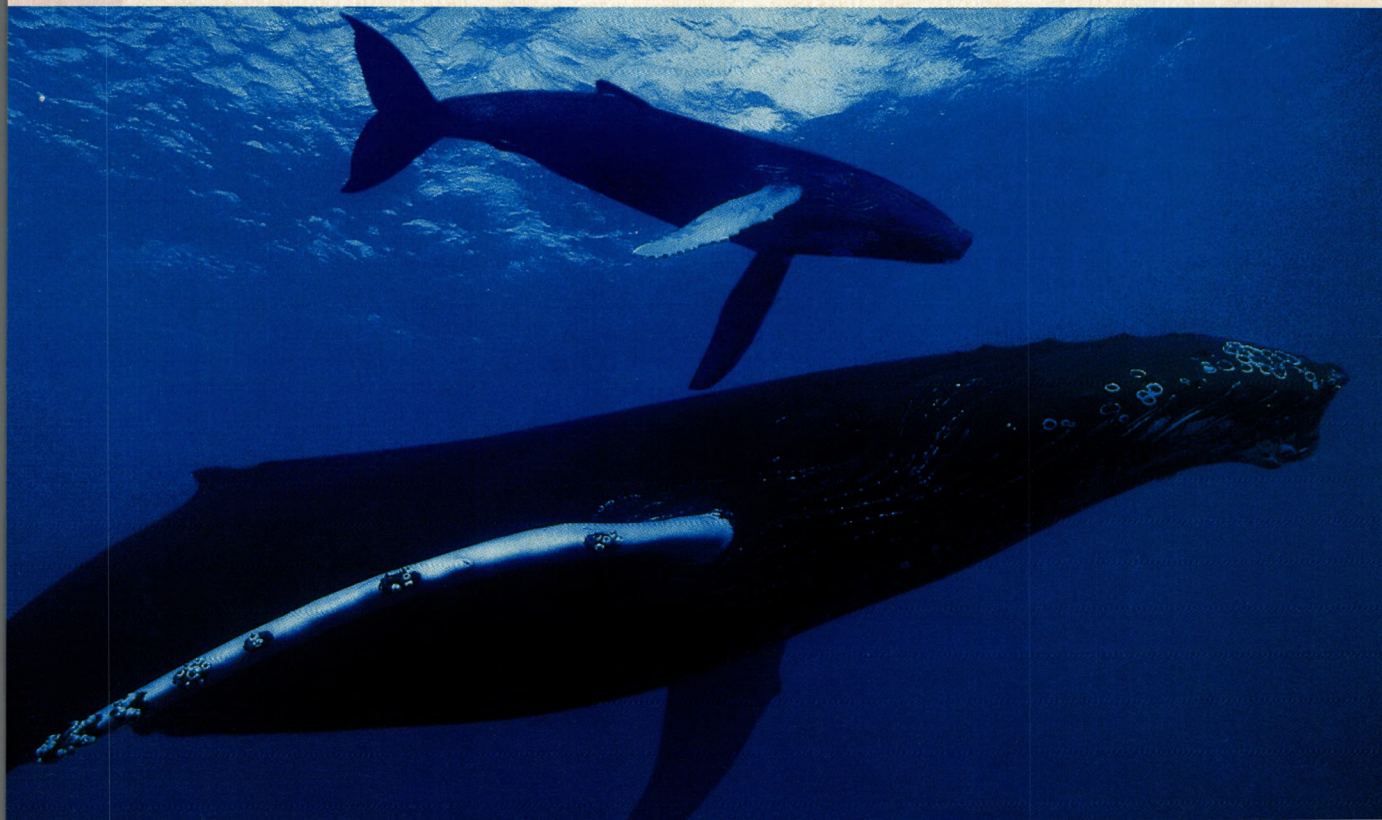
Humpback Whales come to the Dominican Republic's Atlantic coast from January through March to bear their young and mate. The sound of whalesong and the sight of these magnificent marine mammals in the wild is an incomparable experience.

Coming to the Dominican Republic was certainly the most unexpected treat of 1997. Its topography is incredibly varied and its cultural diversity nothing short of astounding. For beach lovers, the Dominican Republic has more than 300 miles of golden sand beaches lined with coconut palms, where swimsuit tops are optional and secluded stretches are still as unspoiled as they were more than 100 years ago.

Owing to its size—it encompasses 30,000 square miles of the eastern two thirds of the island of Hispaniola—the Dominican Republic is not an easy place to sum up in a few words. Sandwiched between the Atlantic Ocean on the north and the Caribbean Sea on the south, it is a giant among the Caribbean's collection of tiny islands.

Dominated by four parallel mountain ranges, the interior's diversity encompasses verdant, rugged hillsides, lush rain forests, fertile farmlands of sugarcane, coffee, cocoa and fruit groves, and even small, cactus speckled deserts. Within the Dominican Alps' central range is Pico Duarte, the Caribbean's tallest peak, soaring 10,700 feet above sea level. Part of the same range has served as an effective natural barrier, insulating the Dominican Republic from its beleaguered neighbor, Haiti.

The marine topography is equally varied. It ranges from colorful, low profile reef tracts with deep undercuts and caves to dramatic, towering pinnacles, cascading walls, and wrecks from numerous ages. Most of the DR's southern coast is comprised of karstic rock. As a result,



THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

there are numerous freshwater caves similar to those found in north-central Florida and Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula. There is definitely more than meets the eye to the Dominican Republic.

Looking at the country now, it is easy to understand why Christopher Columbus proclaimed Hispaniola "The most beautiful land that human eyes have seen," after he stepped ashore December 5, 1492. So enamored was he with it, he asked to be buried here; a request that was respectfully honored.

WHAT AWAITS THE AMERICAN TRAVELER: Lying slightly south of the Tropic of Cancer, the Dominican Republic has a climate that varies little. It is warm and balmy except during the two rainy seasons; one in late spring, the other in fall.

Finding plenty to do and the means to do it, is no problem here. However, deciding what and how much you want to do once you get here, might be difficult.

This dilemma, of course, is further encouraged by the Dominican Republic's substantial development of large modern, luxurious all-inclusive resorts, scattered up and down both coastlines. Most offer nearly all watersports (from boardsailers and sailboats to wave runners and scuba diving), meals, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, entertainment (live nightly performances are usually standard) and children's daycare for incredibly low package rates. Couple this with the unusually low cost and affordable rates most airlines provide to the island and the Dominican Republic is perhaps one of the Caribbean's best kept secrets. It has been known to European and Canadian travelers for some time but, surprisingly, is almost completely unknown in the U.S.

Owing to the scope and self-contained nature of the resorts, which typically cover several acres of their own private beachfront, going outside the grounds for anything is seldom necessary. This can be a pity, because beyond the gates is a countryside steeped in history, with charming people and cultures, as well as plenty of natural beauty.

In the nearby mountains of Puerto Plata, the national park and botanical gardens of Mt. Isabel de Torrores (accessible via a five minute cable car ride, second in size to the one in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) offers a breathtaking view of both the city and coastline. In addition to human tourists, from January through March large numbers of Humpback Whales visit the Dominican Republic's Atlantic coast. Here, they bear their young and mate.

For sightseeing and retracing the steps



Left: A diver and school of Blackbar Soldierfish explore the wreck of the Hickory. Below: The 16th century Fort of San Felipe at Puerto Plata. Bottom: The ruins of Nicolas de Bari, in Santo Domingo. It was the first permanent hospital structure in the Americas. Below left: Divers explore the fascinating freshwater caves at Boca Chica.



of history, the Dominican Republic's capital city of Santo Domingo, on the south coast, contains some of the richest monuments to the exploration and settlement of New World. Founded by Christopher Columbus' brother Bartholomew in 1496, Santo Domingo was the first continuously inhabited colonial seat for the Spanish Empire, in existence until the end of the 16th century when Spain virtually abandoned it in favor of richer lands on the continent. During its short but prosperous period as the capital port of this vast new territory, the city was the site of several firsts: it had the first stone constructed cathedral, monastery, hospital, university and city hall in the new world.

After hours, the cities and towns come alive with nightclubs, bars and discos pulsating to modern music and Merengue, the national music and dance of this island, which reflects the beat of its large mix of Carib/Latin cultures. Seventy percent of the island's population are the result of extensive intermingling between Spanish and white European settlers and African slaves. Spanish is the official language but English is widely spoke and

communication is facilitated by the friendly attitude of the country's people.

The range of dive sites and conditions around the Dominican Republic are surprisingly good. In regions I visited on both the north and south coasts the reefs were both healthy and diverse. Outside Puerto Plata, a site called **Runway** presents a trio of 50 foot high, inverted bucket-shaped coral pinnacles standing side by side across a 65 foot deep sand bottom, with large stands of Elkhorn Corals capping their tops. Near the tip of the Samana Peninsula, where the 150 foot high cliffs of Cabo Cabron meet the sea, the same cliff contours continue downward in the form of steep, cascading coral covered slopes and mini walls (some with large caves) to depths of 140 feet.

On the south side of the country, besides partaking in a couple of freshwater cave dives (some of the easiest and most secure sites I have seen) and a few moderate depth (30 to 60 foot) reef dives, I also explored one of the five most colorful wrecks in the Caribbean. Placed on the bottom in 1986, the 135 foot, fully intact **Hickory** looks like a Hollywood

movie set. Sitting on an even keel at 60 feet, the wreck is covered with numerous colorful corals and sponges, large schools of Blackbar Soldierfish, Glasseye Snappers, squirrelfish and Sergeant Majors; its large mast rises to within three feet of the surface.

Off both coasts I found underwater clarity averaging 80 feet and there was minimal current. While the diving is both



Above: Air Santo Domingo offers easy, convenient inter-island flights. Below: Prieto Tours handles airport transfers and island excursions in the Dominican Republic.



beautiful and easy, this is not one of the fishiest places I have seen. However, because there is a lack of large fish, small reef beauties, such as Spotted Drums, seem to move about the corals with almost complete abandon. And, while diving around **Saona Island**, I was delighted by the sudden appearance of a Dwarf Manta Ray (*Mobula hypostoma*) with a wingspan of five feet. Although rare, things like this can happen. In most places, both single and two tank dives are made from out-board powered, 24 to 27 foot open skiffs. The ride to the sites vary from 10 to 45 minutes each way. Bring a hat and plenty of sunscreen.

Getting There: The Dominican Republic's three major ports for tourism with air access are in metropolitan cities of Puerto Plata on the north coast (also called the Amber Coast) and Santo Domingo on the south coast, with Punta Cana International handling the island's far eastern tip. Among the three, travel to and from the Dominican Republic is simple, just a short distance (less than two hours from Miami, three and a half hours from New York) with numerous airlines (American Airlines, Pan Am and TWA, to name a few) providing direct, nonstop flights to the U.S. Before departure, you will need to purchase a Dominican Republic tourist card (\$10 U.S.) at the ticket counter during check in. The only other requirements for U.S. citizens are a valid passport or an original birth certificate and a valid photo identification. 🐟

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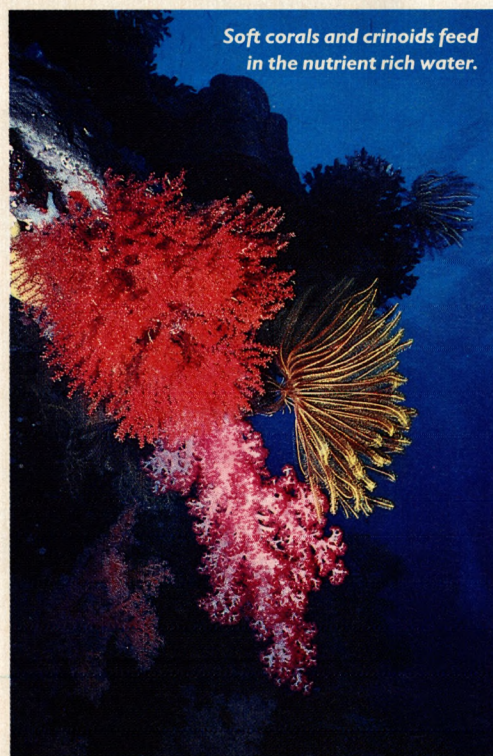
photos/Ray Mains



The New Fiji Aggressor

A FABULOUS LIVE-ABOARD
FOR FABULOUS FIJI

BY STAN WATERMAN



Soft corals and crinoids feed in the nutrient rich water.

“Cheeseburgers in Paradise.” The refrain of the song, belted out by Jimmy Buffett, carries beyond us and is lost in the distant expanse of pale blue, flat-calm sea. Bahamians would call it “an oily glass calm.”

A maddeningly delicious aroma emanates from the grill on the sheltered afterdeck of the most luxurious, diver-friendly, commodious and well-appointed live-aboard dive boat in the world. It is also the newest girl in town—town being the waters of the Fiji Islands. This is the *Fiji Aggressor*, just three months out of her womb, the Nichols Brothers Shipyard in Washington state. She is 105 feet long and four decks high but draws only four feet, because she is an aluminum-hulled catamaran. She is, in her hull design, a near clone of the *Palau Aggressor II*, and the newest addition to the far-reaching Aggressor Fleet. She is Fat City afloat.

I came to her from a week of luxurious living and splendid hospitality at the Jean-Michel Cousteau Resort on Vanua Levu island. The transition was painless. I transferred from a world-class resort to a four star hotel afloat. The *Fiji Aggressor's* eight identical cabins are roomy, light and airy, each with a big above water window, a glass door shower and a head large enough for an hippopotamus. The shower pressure is enough to knock you down and the hot water is instantaneous. These are amenities I wish I had at home.

There is also a hanging closet, seven drawers, two cabinets and enough space under the lower bunk to hide a couple of corpses, all affording more space than Imelda Marcos needed for her shoes. An air-conditioning control with digital calibration allows total control of temperature and air flow. (I go into some detail about the comfort and space of the ship because I remember well when live-aboard dive boats offered cabins the size of broom closets.) I'll have more about the boat later, right now I've strayed too far from the cheeseburgers.

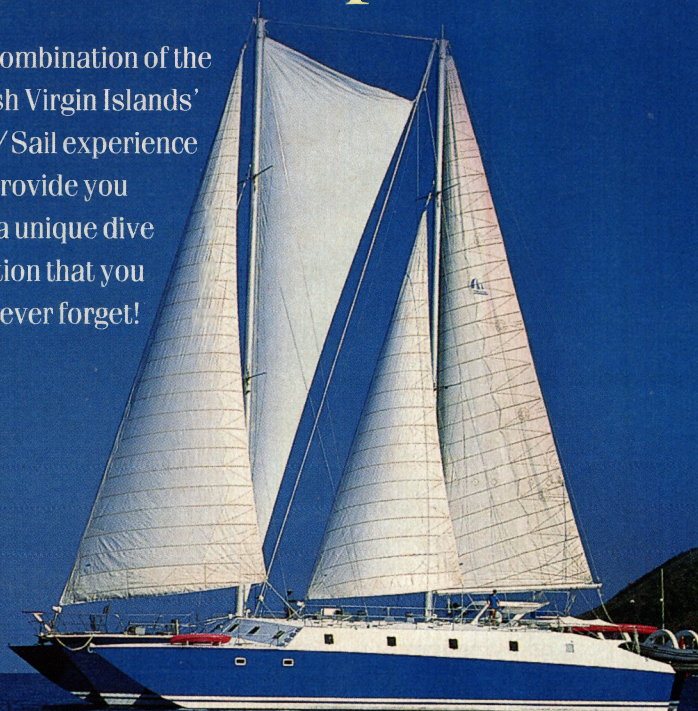
We had just returned from a dive site called E-6. It is a large bommie that ris-

photo/Bonnie J. Cardone

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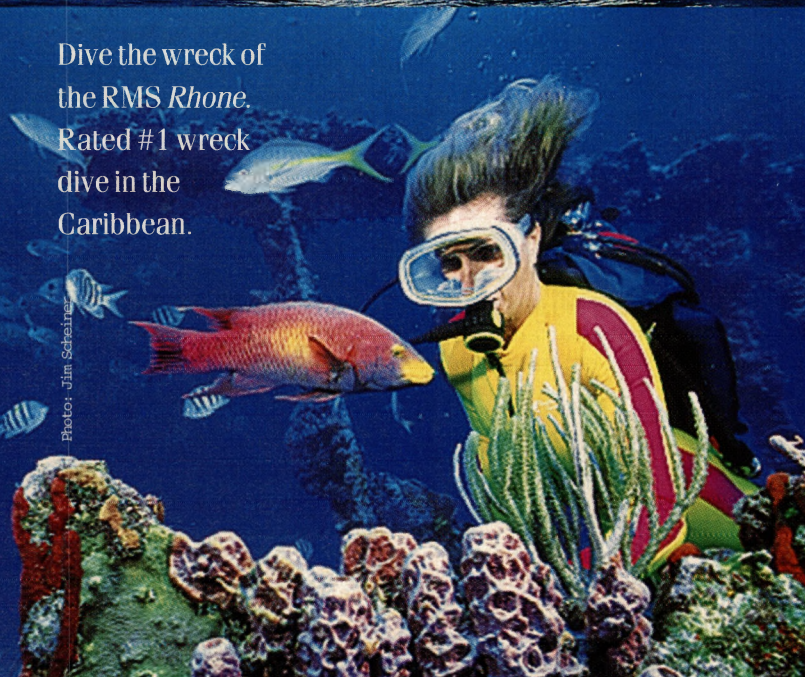
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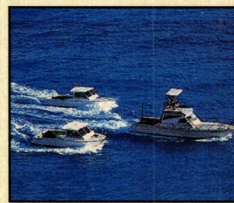
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FIJI AGGRESSOR

es from 3,000 feet to just breaking the surface at extreme low tide. It is in the middle of the Vatu-I-Ra channel between Vanua Levu Island and the main island of Viti Levu to the south. The channel is also called Bligh Water. More than two centuries ago, Captain Bligh, set adrift by the *Bounty* mutineers, made his way through this passage, fearing to land because the islands were populated by cannibals.

AGGRESSOR CELEBRITY CRUISES

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Kona Aggressor II	February 7 to 14
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Palau Aggressor II	October 4 to 11

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Bay Islands Aggressor III	March 14 to 21
Belize Aggressor III	November 7 to 14

JIM CHURCH/STAN WATERMAN PHOTO COURSES

Palau Aggressor II

April 19 to 26
November 8 to 15

Truk Aggressor II

November 1 to 8

JIM CHURCH PHOTO COURSES

Fiji Aggressor
May 2 to 9

Belize Aggressor III
May 30 to June 6

Okeanos Aggressor
August 18 to 28

Bay Islands Aggressor III (in Belize)
October 17 to 24

CLAY WISEMAN PHOTO COURSES

Fiji Aggressor
January 3 to 10

STAN WATERMAN PHOTO COURSES

Belize Aggressor III
January 3 to 10

Fiji Aggressor
June 6 to 13

Galapagos Aggressor II
July 16 to 23

Okeanos Aggressor
September 19 to 28

Cayman Aggressor III
October 3 to 10

E-6 is one of the most spectacular of the many splendid dive sites that make the itinerary of the *Fiji Aggressor*. At the top of the coral plateau massive expanses of branching corals (*Acropora robusta*) provide shelter and safety for thousands of golden *Anthias* and comical Humbugs. They appear in brilliant spangled clouds over the coral. As if snatched back into the coral by an angry mother, they vanish when the diver approaches and exhales a cacophony of bubbles.

(Continued on Page 67)

TECHNIFACTS

High Altitude Diving, the Tampico and More

BY E.R. CROSS



The Tampico shortly after she ran aground off Baja California in May 1957.

For many years, we have known some aspects of diving at altitude required changes in the procedures used at sea level. As early as 1966 a Technifacts reader wrote, "What factors should we take into account in diving in bodies of water at altitudes above 5,000 feet? More specifically, 'What is necessary to complete safe decompression for such a dive?' Recently, 31 years later, another reader wrote, 'I would like to know if the U.S. Navy Standard Air Decompression Tables would have to be modified for fresh water diving at altitudes different from sea level?' For safe diving, the answer to both those questions is that we do need to take special precautions for high altitude diving.

Skin Diver Magazine first published "High Altitude Decompression" in Technifacts in the November 1970 issue. That Technifacts was reprinted with permission in the *NAUI News* for September/October 1972. In *NAUI* Publication No. 5, C.L. Smith provided valuable information. Also in that issue of *NAUI News*, Smith addressed other problems in his article, "Depth Gauge Corrections for Altitude and Fresh Water Diving."

In the intervening years, there has been a great deal written about decompression

requirements at altitude. NAUI, PADI, SSI and other dive training organizations have published tables for altitude diving. They have also addressed the problem in their training and instruction manuals. The *NOAA Diving Manual* provides a chapter entitled "Altitude Diving Tables in Use." For Canadian SDM readers, the Canadian *DCIEM Diving Manual* provides information on diving at altitude. Both manuals are available from Best Publishing Company, P.O. Box 30100, Flagstaff, AZ 86003-0100.

For a copy of NAUI's cross conversion tables published as "High Altitude Decompression" and C.L. Smith's "Depth Gauge Corrections" send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to, E.R. Cross, Technifacts, c/o *Skin Diver*, 6420 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90048-5515.

EARLY ISSUES OF SKIN DIVER

A December 1951, Volume 1, Number 1, First Edition of SDM, then called *The Skin Diver*, is extremely rare. Jim Auxier and Chuck Blakeslee developed their idea for a national dive magazine in the early months of 1951. The first issue contained 16 pages, with six advertisements, includ-

ing Sea Net Manufacturing Co., the first producer of skin diving and spearfishing equipment (originally for fishermen, not divers); Rene Sports, which later became the giant U.S. Divers Corp.; and, of course, Voit. Also, in its day the one and only California dive charter boat *Maray* advertised as well. Volume XI, Number 1, January 1962, was also an important publication. For one thing it had grown in size. It contained more than 100 pages and hundreds of ads. And, the first issue of *The Skin Diver* was reproduced, complete, in the January 1962 *Skin Diver*. With perseverance, and much luck, it may be an easier issue to find than Vol. 1, No. 1.

If you're looking for other issues of *Skin Diver*, Jose (Pico) Castello of Cozumel has a collection for sale. His issues date from 1962 to the present. Anyone interested in buying them (he says they're in good condition), should contact Jose (Pico) Castello, Dive Paradise, Cozumel, Mexico; phone (011) 52 987 21007, fax (011) 52 987 21061 or e-mail appledp@cozumel.czm.com.mx.

A POTPOURRI OF DIVING MEMORIES

It is amazing how quickly our memory of well known diving individuals fails. John Guy Gilpatric was a noted author of the classic *The Compleat Goggler* in the

early years of diving. Gilpatric's humorous exploits with primitive diving equipment in the Mediterranean left early divers fascinated. Equipment for early Mediterranean diving consisted of goggles (not masks) a knife and a handspear. *Skin Diver* reprinted *The Compleat Goggler* in the March, April, May and June 1956 issues. An early friend of Gilpatric was Carl Kohler, an early *Skin Diver* contributor. Dr. Samuel Miller wrote, "For the last six months I have been working on the 'Gilpatric Project,' for lack of a better name. I am trying to tie the pieces of Guy Gilpatric's life together." Sam continued, "I would like to enlist Technifacts assistance in my search for friends, relatives or anyone who may have known Guy Gilpatric or his wife Louise." Miller would also like to reach family or friends of Kohler. Send information to Dr. Sam Miller, 1629 Maywood Avenue, Upland, CA 91786.

Donald A. Cable would like to correspond about treasure research with serious *Skin Diver* readers. Readers interested in the study and research of wrecks should write directly to 1006 Highland Lakes Trace, Birmingham, AL 35242.

One more missing personality: Jack Bromiley wrote asking for information on Max Eugen Nohl. He worked with Desco in developing and testing mixed

gas deep diving in the 1930s. If readers can supply information, please send it to Jack Bromiley, Mesa Road N1819, La Crosse, WI 54601-8424.

A South Africa Technifacts reader is looking for the book entitled *International Guide to Working on Oil Rigs* by Tom Williams. Also, this reader needs a copy of the June 1996 issue of *Skin Diver*. If anyone can help with this request write to Warren Lebanathan, 32 Erythrina Avenue, Croftoene, Chatsworth, Durban, KZN, South Africa, 4092.

RETURN TO THE TAMPICO

The tanker *Tampico* wrecked off the coast of Baja California in May 1957. The vessel is now destroyed, partly owing to salvors and partly owing to the savagery of the sea. There has always been conflict about the vessel's ownership and nationality. I have always assumed she was owned by Petroleos Mexicanos, the Mexican national oil cartel. I have photos of her taken a couple of weeks after she grounded showing the home port as Panama. This is not unusual since many owners of vessels used Panama as a convenient port of registry, for tax and other liability concerns. Lloyd's Registry of Shipping shows the *Tampico* as a twin screw diesel vessel. When I dived her shortly after she



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TECHNIFACTS

grounded, I thought she was a single screw tanker. She grounded on a rocky headland, and I thought a second screw would not have been buried. If anyone has additional information on the *Tampico*, please send it to E.R. Cross, Technifacts, c/o *Skin Diver*, 6420 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90048-5515.

Even though the *Tampico* was sitting nearly upright, I preferred not to make a

penetration dive. There was dangerous surge running into and out of the hull. Many movable objects were flopping around owing to the surge. Also, a real danger was the tremendous wind draft generated in the part of the hull that was above water. For every eight gallons of water that surged into the hull, one cubic foot of air was displaced through deck hatches, portholes and other openings above water. Objects near this tremendous draft could be torn loose and become dangerous.

The vessel was nearly 400 feet long, with a beam of 55 feet. At least half of the

bottom was open to the surging sea at about 10 feet. Probably, at maximum surge, more than 8,000 cubic feet of air was pushed through the hull and out any available openings. Divers should keep these hazards in mind when planning dives on partially submerged wrecks. Large volumes of rapidly moving air can also generate potential hazards.

READ THE WATER

It is particularly important to read the water when diving wrecks. Not just the flow of water into and out of a wreck but what the water, and possibly wind generated by surge in partially submerged wrecks, is doing to your favorite wreck. Remember the old railroad crossing sign; Stop, Look and Listen. You will be glad you did. 🐟

Dive Notes

CONTINENTAL MICRONESIA'S 1998 DISCOUNTED DIVE PACKAGES: Continental Micronesia will continue to offer discounted dive packages in 1998. Most of the wholesalers will offer all-inclusive



photo/Al Hornsby

discount packages with up to 50 percent savings. Continental Micronesia's in-house tour division, Island Adventures at (800) 900-7657, is currently offering packages to Guam, Palau, Truk and Yap starting at \$1,150.

There have also been changes to the Yap schedule owing to airport runway construction. Planes will be flying in Wednesdays and Sundays for departures/arrivals.

Continental Micronesia also has a new Groups & Buddies Program, offering fully escorted tours to the exciting dive destinations of Micronesia. The program is designed for all divers traveling with or without a buddy and can accommodate larger groups in search of a great vacation. A variety of dive destinations throughout Micronesia are offered with the program, including Palau, Truk and Yap. Upcoming departure dates from the various destinations are listed on the Web site at www.destmic.com or you can speak with one of the travel specialists by calling (800) GO-DIVING. 🐟

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Each of these floating resorts offer fourteen guests deluxe accommodations including private baths in each stateroom, a spacious salon, an intimate dining area, and a full-service photo center for capturing every breath-taking moment of your adventure. The four-day humpback charters include diving and memorable land tours through diverse environments teeming with unique animals, flora and fauna. You will also explore ancient archeological sites. Guests may extend their adventure with a seven-day trip to the northern Galapagos islands of Wolf and Darwin. This time of the year is excellent for whale shark encounters. Whale shark activity here is so profuse, Darwin Island is better known as the *Ningaloo Reef of Latin America*.



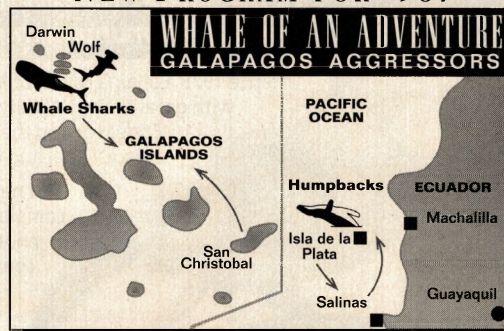
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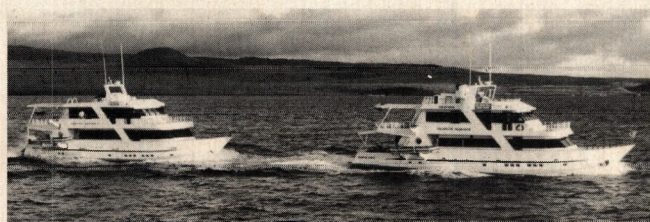
Wayne Hasson

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The CD-ROM is easy to install and is compatible with PC and Macintosh based systems. There is also a VHS-based course available for those who do not have a CD-ROM drive.

PADI designed the course to make it user friendly, interesting and fun. The CD-ROM consists of five modules and each contains a knowledge review that must be completed, printed and presented to Red Sail Sports in order to move forward with the certification process.

The cost of the course is \$325 on Aruba and \$440 on Grand Cayman. Dive equipment, knowledge reviews and tests, pool work and four open water dives are included in the price. Students should book the course at least three weeks before their departure date in order to allow sufficient time to study the material. Once the reservation has been made, a complete Open Water Training Package, including CD-ROM or VHS tape, will be mailed directly to the customer. For more information or to book this course, call (800) 225-6425. 

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NEW MANAGERS FOR CAPTAIN MORGAN'S RETREAT: Captain Morgan's Retreat, a beach resort on Ambergris Caye in Belize, recently named Hugh and Teresa Parkey as managers. The couple has many years of experience in the resort industry in Belize, managing live-aboard dive boats and atoll based resorts. They also own the Fort Street Restaurant and Guest House in Belize City, one of the premier eating establishments in the country.

Hugh, who has made his living from diving for 25 years, also owns Hugh Parkey's Belize Dive Connection, which will soon be moving to Ambergris Caye and Captain Morgan's Retreat. The operation will offer day trips to the Turneffe Islands—where he has 70 dive sites recorded on GPS—and Lighthouse Reef Atoll for trips to the Great Blue Hole, Half Moon Caye and Long Caye. The San Pedro Barrier Reef diving will still be handled by local divemaster Patojo Paz.

Captain Morgan's Resort offers 21 beachfront, thatched-roof *casitas* with a freshwater swimming pool and sand-floored bar.

The resort is now offering a winter getaway special for \$1,239 per person, double occupancy. The price includes roundtrip air fare from Miami, Houston or New Orleans (Monday through Thursday departure); roundtrip transfers; breakfast daily; taxes and gratuity. The offer is good December 15, 1997 through April 30, 1998.

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KEEP YOUR WETSUIT WARM

BY JIM WALKER

PHOTO BY BONNIE J. CARDONE

Anyone who has worn a wetsuit while diving in cold water has wished for a way to add heat to it. While several methods of wetsuit warming have been tried, one of the most ingenious is the Aqua Heat from Patco. This advanced device uses DC current to warm a small heating pad worn under the wetsuit. (Because the pad generates so much heat, a second pad of insulating neoprene is worn between the heating pad and the body.)

The system includes the 5 by 9 inch, 0.8 inch thick pad, a battery pack with tank mounting system, and waterproof connections. Both 6 and 12 volt systems are available. The total weight of the six volt system is 4.6 pounds in air, 2.5 pounds negative in the water. The 12 volt system (shown here) is 9.5 pounds in air and 5

pounds negative in water. Prices range from \$199 to \$299 and drysuit heating systems are also available.

The battery packs are rated to a maximum depth of 160 feet. For deeper dives there is an optional battery enclosure rat-



ed to 500 feet. Other options include magnetic on/off switches, battery chargers, cases, additional batteries and a double connection (for the 12 volt system) that allows the diver to operate the heating pad and an Aqua Lite (underwater light) from the same battery pack.

For more information contact Patco Service, Inc., 2515 Glencoe Road, Baltimore, MD 21234; (410) 444-4010 or fax (410) 254-9566. 



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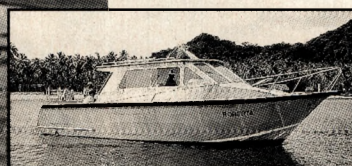
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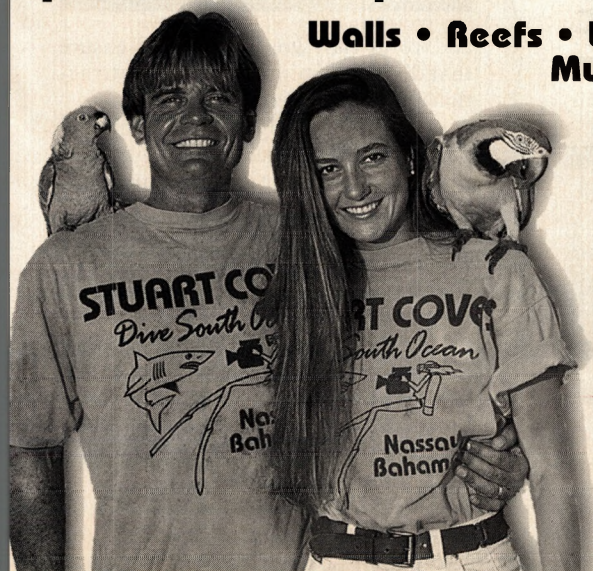
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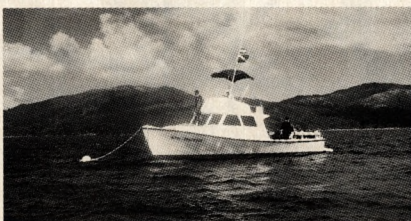
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Dive Notes

GUANAJA, BAY ISLANDS, HONDURAS REEF MOORING BUOY PROJECT: The Guanaja Tourism Association has approved the expenditure of visitor impact fee funds to install 30 permanent reef mooring buoys on Guanaja's coral reefs. Thanks to the dedication of Project Coordinator Sandra Bazley and a host of volunteers and contributors, reef mooring buoys are now available at most popular dive sites.

Keeping the coral reefs healthy and alive is a priority for everyone on the island. The creation of the Guanaja Marine Reserve is moving forward, with this mooring project being the first in a series of planned strategies for marine conservation.



The installation of the buoys was a community event, with volunteer divers providing assistance and local resorts and other businesses donating boats, fuel, lodging, meals and supplies. Reef Relief, a non-profit coral reef conservation organization based in Key West, Florida, USA was commissioned to direct the project and provide the necessary equipment and training.

The mooring buoys require a regular inspection and maintenance program to keep them in good working order. The dive operations of Bayman Bay Resort on the north side and Posada Del Sol Resort on the south side of the island have agreed to share this responsibility. Lost or damaged buoys will be reported to them for immediate replacement. Since the buoys are community property, stealing them is a municipal offense, punishable by fine.

Reef Relief has agreed to set up a buoy fund to purchase buoy components, when needed. Contributions to the buoy fund are tax deductible for U.S. contributors. You can sponsor a buoy for \$500 U.S. An English/Spanish informational map/brochure containing information on the buoys, their location, the Guanaja Marine Reserve, the coral reef ecosystem and tips for eco-friendly diving, boating and living is being prepared for distribution to all residents and visitors. Contact the Guanaja Marine Reserve c/o (504) 54 44 43 or Reef Relief at (305) 294-3100 for further information. 🐟

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The abandoned 270 foot Luis Brion.

and world-class wrecks, but you'll ensure that diving remains the primary attraction of Aruba for decades to come.

In addition to helping create a marine park, you can also help classify Aruba as the #1 wreck diving destination in the world by encouraging the island government to sink the abandoned car ferry *Luis Brion*, creating a new wreck dive.

Please send your statement of support to the Aruba Tourism Authority: phone (011) 2978-21019, fax (011) 2978-34702 or e-mail atanj@ix.netcom.com. In the U.S., write to Red Sail Sports, c/o Project Protect Aruba, 909 Montgomery, Suite 601, San Francisco, CA 94133 or e-mail Redsail@setarnet.aw. 🐟

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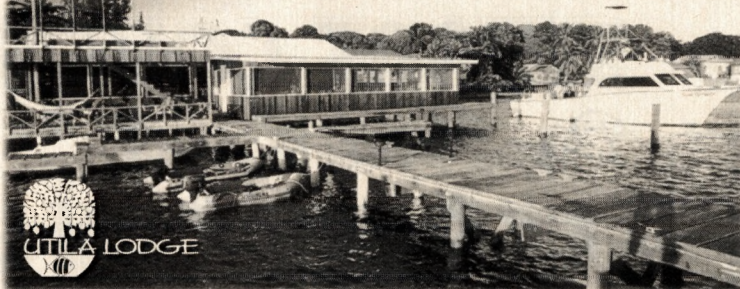
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Shooting Shipwrecks

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM CHURCH



This is the way the bow of the Oro Verde looked shortly after she sank off Grand Cayman.

With the increasing number of ships, aircraft and other man-made objects being sunk to create artificial reefs and dive sites, more underwater videographers are recording shipwrecks on tape.

For some, shipwrecks provide a golden opportunity to film the fish, colorful corals and other marine life that live in, on and around wrecks. Others seek artifacts that were once the tools and possessions of past crews. A few are simply awed by the sheer size of a large wreck. For me, the history of the wreck is also important. I can't describe the thrill of diving the carrier *USS Saratoga*, battleship *HIJMS Nagato* and other test ships at Bikini Atoll.

MULTIPLE DIVE SITES: Large wrecks often offer multiple dive sites. For example, the bow, midships and stern of the *Shinkoku Maru*, in Truk Lagoon, offer completely different views. Each section offers more than enough subject matter for a video dive. Penetrate a wreck and you will see a new set of sites—submerged engine rooms, compartments filled with fish, cargo holds and artifacts such as a ship's wheel or engine room telegraph.

The crumpled remains of the *Balboa*, in Grand Cayman, offer multiple video

opportunities, day or night. Air pockets in the overturned hull section can be used for reflection shots and the propeller is an excellent background for diver shots. At night the *Balboa* is loaded with octopus, lobster, multitudes of fish and other creatures.

WHERE ARE WE? Even if creature close-ups are your main interest, use some wide angle shots to introduce the wreck. When you play your tape, viewers will want to know where you were.

You can start with upward angle shots showing divers descending to the wreck or with a downward view as you descend. Choose part of the wreck that has prominent features such as an anchor windlass or bridge structure. Then you can slowly swim along a railing or over the deck. Having divers in the introductory scenes establishes size proportion.

GOING INSIDE: Wheelhouses, open holds and many other wreck interiors are often bright enough for navigation. However, some spaces below decks, such as engine rooms, can get dark darn soon! If you decide to penetrate dark spaces, you are combining cave diving, night diving and night video—you need special training! Never go in so far that you can't find your way out if all your lights fail.

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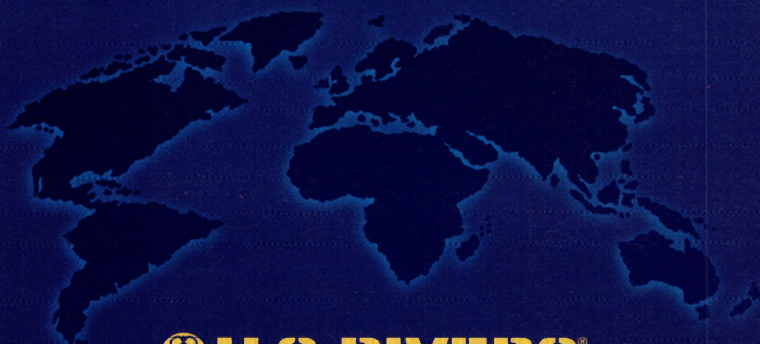
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A fine layer of silt blankets the decks inside some wrecks. Thus, you must move slowly with minimum fin movement. If you kick hard and often, clouds of light blocking silt can dramatically reduce visibility. Believe me, there is nothing more terrifying than being lost inside a dark wreck!

MARINE LIFE CLOSE-UPS: Shooting marine life close-ups requires an entirely different mindset than shooting wide angle "show them the wreck" shots. The two key points are: have a subject and settle before you start shooting. Look for something specific, such as clownfish darting around in a field of anemone tentacles. Then, get your body under control before you start shooting. Too often, beginners



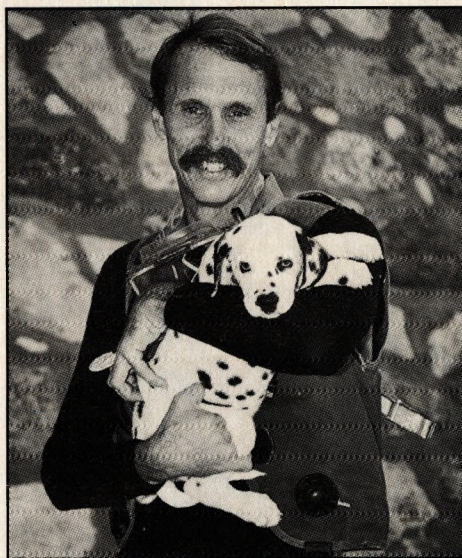
Putting the gun turret of the USS Saratoga in the foreground makes the diver appear tiny and gives the shot a dramatic scale.

start a close-up shot before they settle and stabilize the camera. Slow down, settle, choose a camera angle and adjust the image size before starting the shot.

SHOOTING ARTIFACTS: Artifacts can range from large subjects, such as a tank on the deck of the *San Francisco Maru*, to smaller subjects such as dishes or bottles. One of your major goals should be to shoot artifacts without breaking anything. While it is hard to break a tank, many other artifacts are fragile. Shoot the fragile artifacts in their natural state. Don't feel compelled to handle and move everything. I've seen irreparable damage done to books, clothing, pottery and other fragile artifacts at Truk Lagoon because they were handled roughly.

CONCLUSIONS: Don't think of a wreck as being just a pile of rusty metal. A wreck can be an underwater museum crammed with artifacts and home for myriad undersea creatures. A wreck can provide multiple dive sites for multiple interests. 🐠

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Dive Notes

NAUI OFFERS NEW RESORT PROGRAM:

NAUI Worldwide's new resort course package makes new diver training in the resort setting easier and more convenient for the participant and more cost effective for the provider.

Key to the program is NAUI's revised Entry Scuba Experience (Resort Course) Manual. It is intended for nondivers planning to visit a dive resort or destination. This approach saves training time at the resort. The visitor reads the manual, completes the basic level scuba exam and medical history form and prepares any questions before arriving. No video, classroom or poolside lectures are required, although support videos are available. The instructor reviews the traveler's exam and medical history, resolves any questions and confined-water skills training can begin.

Information on the program and the new NAUI Entry Scuba Experience Manual are available from any NAUI Service Center, representative or from NAUI Headquarters. NAUI Worldwide offers a full range of training programs from Skin Diver through Instructor Course Director, with dozens of specialty courses, including nitrox and technical diving. Thousands of member instructors, affiliated stores, resorts and service centers are in scores of countries throughout the world.

For further information on NAUI Worldwide members, affiliated stores, resorts and instruction, visit the NAUI Worldwide Web site at www.nauai.org/, call (813) 628-6284 or write to NAUI Worldwide, 9942 Currie Davis Drive, Suite H, Tampa, FL 33619-2667.

TONG TO TAKE PACIFIC RIM FOR NAUI:

Michael Tong of Kuala Lumpur will be NAUI Worldwide's training representative for the Pacific Rim. Tong will replace Harry Ellis of Hawaii, who recently retired after serving NAUI with distinction for 15 years as branch manager, sales and training representative.

NAUI is experiencing rapid growth in the Pacific Rim region, partly owing to the presence of the NAUI Asia Pacific Service Center in Singapore and the availability of NAUI courses and products in several area languages, including Korean, Mandarin, Malay and Japanese.

It will be Tong's responsibility to coordinate and support leadership training in various Pacific Rim countries to meet the demand for NAUI instructors, divemasters and other diving leaders there. Among others, his service area

will include Korea, China, Malaysia and other communities in the East Indies and South Pacific. Hawaii will not be included and will revert to a NAUI territory supported from the continental U.S.

Tong invites contact from all Pacific scuba facilities, resorts and schools. NAUI Worldwide leadership training programs can be arranged on-site wherever there is sufficient interest.

Michael Tong may be contacted directly at 18 Jalan Utara off Jalan Imbi, Kuala Lumpur 55106, Malaysia. Call (603) 241-5201, fax (603) 241-5202 or send e-mail to mike@seadvr.po.my.

NAUI Worldwide is the world's oldest nonprofit membership training agency organized solely to support and promote dive safety through education. For further information on NAUI programs, visit the NAUI Web site at www.nauai.org/ or call NAUI Services Asia Pacific, in Singapore, at 65-777-5120.

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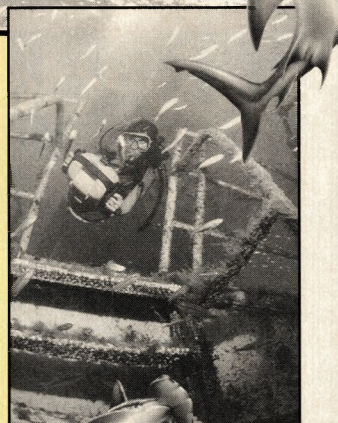
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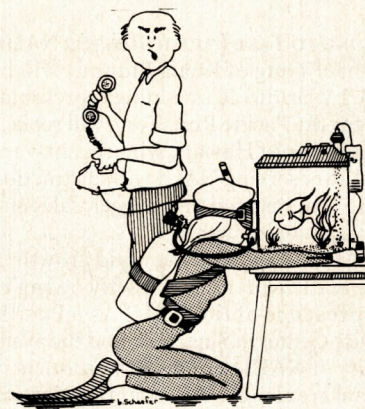
NAUI WORLDWIDE HEADQUARTERS MOVES TO FLORIDA: The National Association of Underwater Instructors (NAUI) Worldwide has moved its headquarters to Tampa, Florida. Concurrent with the move, the HQ will place into operation a totally new computer system.

"These two actions will enable us to develop major streamlining of our operation and to provide an even more efficient and effective service to our affiliate stores and members," said NAUI Worldwide President, Jim Bram. "This will allow us to focus on training, product development and other membership needs."

NAUI Worldwide is the world's oldest not for profit membership training agency, organized solely to support and promote dive safety through education. Formed in 1960, NAUI Worldwide offers a full range of training programs from skin diver through Instructor Course Director, with dozens of specialty courses including nitrox and technical diving. Thousands of member instructors, affiliated stores, resorts and service centers are in countries throughout the world.

For further information on NAUI Worldwide affiliated stores, resorts and diving instruction, visit the NAUI Worldwide Internet Web site at <http://www.naui.org/>; write to 9942 Currie Davis Drive, Ste. H, Tampa, FL 33619-2267; or call (813) 628-6284, fax (813) 628-8253.

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(Continued from Page 46)

In the rubble approaching the entrance to The Cathedral are dozens of Poison Bristleworms, a nudibranch with lacy frill, often blue or green and about three to

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Kona Aggressor II Hawaii	80'	10	7 days	\$1,795
Okeanos Aggressor Costa Rica	120'	21	10 & 11 days	\$2,495/ \$2,795
Palau Aggressor II Palau	106'	16	7 days	\$2,295
Sere-Ni-Wai Fiji	101'	10	7 days	\$2,195
Truk Aggressor II Truk Lagoon	110'	14	7 days	\$2,095
Turks & Caicos Aggressor Turks & Caicos	100'	16	7 days	\$1,595

Body heat restored, we replaced our lost calories with cheeseburgers, fries and a green salad in the sun. The chef, Iliesu Finau, directed the cuisine at the Jean-Michel Cousteau Resort. The chow is

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abundant, varied and excellent. The tradition of restorative and delicious soups on the Aggressor Fleet vessels is well served.

The salon, with comfortable sofas that invite napping, has a wetbar, an entertainment center with a 32 inch TV, a well-stocked library with fish I.D. books, Hollywood movies and CDs for the stereo system that selectively reaches all decks. So, if you want to escape the gravel voice of Louis Armstrong while snoozing in

one of the four net hammocks slung in the shade of the upper sundeck, you can do so without enraging the jazz fans on the next deck down.

There's a soda fountain that dispenses soft drinks and soda water, a wine bilge (that's the boating version of a wine cellar) with a stock of excellent Australian wines and full stock of booze for aging perverts such as me.

The night dives begin at dusk, with just enough light to scope out the terrain before darkness embraces the reef. Thus, dinner is served after the night dives. The timing was applauded by all of us Sybarites

aboard. With the day's diving ended we could have a cocktail and then complement the fresh fish or roast lamb with a Chardonnay or a Cabernet Sauvignon Chiraz '96. The price is right—all drinks are on the house. However, and in keeping with policy on all live-aboard dive boats, alcoholic beverages are off limits to divers in action during the diving day.

The crew of a live-aboard dive boat can make or break the trip. I have been on boats that left much to be desired but the experience was salvaged by a bright, attentive and thoroughly qualified crew. A Fijian crew is almost predestined to be good. They are born mariners, cheerful, strong, outgoing and highly intelligent. The men are big, their strong faces often punctuated by flashing white smiles. Our divemaster, Fiji Bear, is a great mass of muscle and smiles. He came to the boat with more than 11,000 dives behind him and, putting it modestly, has an intimate knowledge of the reefs. He was my macro eyes and could spot a leaf fish where I saw only blank coral.

Captain Troy Parker and his wife, Trinka, are veteran Aggressor managers, having transferred from the *Truk Aggressor II*. The command of this newest and finest flagship was a major and coveted plum, well earned by these two competent, socially delightful professionals.

Fiji Bear has strong family ties to the village of Motu Riki on the island of Niu Basaga. Only with the permission of the village chief is the *Aggressor* allowed to launch its divers into the rich marine environment of the nearby lagoon. We dived a coral head there that was festooned with nudibranchs. Being addicted to macro shooting, I am quite mad for nudibranchs. Last night I dreamt of the field day I had on that coral head and woke up sobbing.

Our arrival off Motu Riki occasioned great and joyous activity ashore. A visit to the village to share a *kava* ceremony with them is part of the *Fiji Aggressor* itinerary. For the village, for whom life rolls by on a little changing course, a visit by the boat is an opportunity for a party. There is nothing commercial about it. The pleasure in making new friends is reciprocal; the village is proud of its traditions and the quality of its hospitality.

In the thatch-sided meeting house, sitting on the woven mat in a semi-circle, we faced the village adults with a small gaggle of excited children. In the center was the great, carved *kava* bowl. The muddy brew is prepared by mixing water with the pulverized roots of the *kava* plant. Let's pass over a description of the taste and point out how relieved we were to learn the finished brew had not been created by old women chewing the *kava* and spitting it into the bowl. That was the

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old, traditional way. These days it is pulverized in a mortar and mixed with water. There is a slight Novocaine effect. No one gets hammered. But, you must down the cup, bottom-up, when it is passed to you and observe a ritual of clapping. During the course of our visit, the cup was frequently passed.

The women performed a dance, pantomiming to a Fijian folk song. Three guitars were led by Fiji Bear, a stick and log providing the beat; the music and laughter filled the house and flowed out over the village. Children crowded by the open doors, hopping with the rhythm and skylarking.

When the women had finished, they advanced upon us men in the audience—not without some alarm on our part—pulled us up into dancing position, circled our waists with strong, brown arms and impelled us into their dance. Fortunately, an Arthur Murray dance course was not required for full command of the step. It was four steps forward, four steps back, over and over again. The village men pulled the women into the terpsichorean melee, conga lines were formed, circle variations coalesced and evaporated. What the dance might have lacked in sophistication, it made up in sheer energy and joy. It was a hoot!

Given the warm appeal of these people, reflected in the crew, and the apex quality of the boat, one has a marriage made in heaven. Fiji and her new lady, the *Fiji Aggressor*, provide some of the happiest adventures in diving I have encountered.

Not until almost the last day of the week's tour did I ask Trinka about the cage close to the hottub on the salon deck and learned—to my astonishment—that it was an elevator for handicapped guests. It descended one deck down to the dive deck, which is also the cabin deck. I then realized the seat built into my cabin shower, along with the special railings and wide doors, were all thoughtfully provided for handicapped divers.

But why not? The *Fiji Aggressor* may well deserve the title of "First" among her peers.

For more information or reservations, contact the Aggressor Fleet at (800) 348-2628, (504) 385-2628, fax (504) 384-0817. You can send e-mail to divboat@compuserve.com or visit the Web site at www.aggressor.com. Oh yes, you can also write to P.O. Box 1470, Morgan City, LA 70381-1470.



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Dive Notes

LAPORTE'S SKINDIVING SHOP CELEBRATES ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY: Wayne and Judy LaPorte, owners of LaPorte's Skindiving Shop in Newbury, New Hampshire, have been diving longer than many of their students have been alive. Their shop is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year.

The LaPortes are still diving and still enjoying it; they have seen a lot of changes in the past four decades. They started diving with a double hose regulator and homemade suits.

They were self-taught divers simply because there wasn't anyone around to teach them. If things didn't work right the first time, they tried something different the next time.



The LaPortes consider the BC the best improvement made to diving in the last 40 years. Before the BC, they point out, divers were hard pressed to stay on the surface any length of time. If it became a real problem, they dropped their weight-belts in order to float more easily.

Through the years Wayne and Judy have been called upon to search for nearly everything imaginable and some things nearly unimaginable in Sunapee Lake: boat motors, glasses, whole boats, false teeth, a glass eye and even a toupee (twice!).

Every year just before midnight, Wayne and Judy go under Sunapee's ice to see the New Year in underwater. They have taken to heart the old Roman saying, "What you are doing when the New Year arrives, you will do often during the year." The LaPortes can't think of anything they'd rather be doing during the year than diving. It still gives them a natural high nearly every time they go, even after 40 years.

For more information on Wayne and Judy LaPorte's Skindiving Shop, write to 1053 Route 103, Newbury, NH 03255 or call (603) 763-5353.

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Bay Islands Live-Aboard Adventures

ON PETER HUGHES' WIND DANCER

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICK FREHSEE



Top: The 120 foot *Wind Dancer* carries a maximum of 20 guests to the best sites in the Bay Islands. **Middle photo above:** An Azure Vase Sponge blooms on West End Wall off Roatan. **Above:** Elegant table settings create the proper mood for the evening meal.

72 SKIN DIVER DECEMBER 1997

As you approach the isthmus of Central America from the Caribbean you are apt to encounter the Islas de la Bahia, or the Bay Islands—a string of idyllic island gems that appear too beautiful to be real. This is precisely the route taken by Christopher Columbus during his fourth and final voyage to the New World in 1502. Approaching first the islands and then the coast, Columbus called the area Honduras, which means deep-water or deep sea. Today, this is the special realm of the *Wind Dancer*, Peter Hughes' luxury dive live-aboard. Cruising the waters of the Bay Islands of Honduras, *Wind Dancer* continues the Peter Hughes tradition of combining excellence in accommodations and service with the best diving areas of the world.

As revealed by *Wind Dancer's* sophisticated electronics, the undersea topography of this coastal region is much richer and varied than Columbus could have ever known. The oceanside of the Bay Islands is bordered by the Bartlett Trough, the second deepest abyss in the Caribbean. The three largest of the Bay Islands—Utila,

Roatan and Guanaja—are the above water representation of the Bartlett ridge, an undersea extension of the Sierra de Omoa mountain range in northern Honduras. Fringing these islands is a

SDM TRAVEL AT A GLANCE

Wind Dancer and the Bay Islands are best known for:

- Excellent accommodations and service
- Species diversity
- Seamounts
- Caverns and canyons

coral reef that exhibits both an exaggerated spur and groove system and a shallow, nearly continuous wall. Dive sites along this reef take advantage of both moun-

tainous corals and dramatic grooves, canyons and swim-throughs.

A shallow continental shelf passes beneath the island of Utila and supports the Cayos Cochinos, a related island archipelago only 12 miles from shore. Dive sites along this shelf present some of the greatest species diversity (and therefore some of the best underwater photography) in the entire Caribbean. The shelf also provides a pedestal for an interesting phenomenon known locally as seamounts—reef pinnacles that rise to within 40 to 60 feet of the surface, an oasis effect that is a focus of sea life.

Only aboard *Wind Dancer*, with its range and mobility, can a diver sample the total diversity of the Bay Islands. And, with the appointment and service created by Peter Hughes and delivered aboard *Wind Dancer*, diving adventure includes a degree of luxury and comfort seldom realized at the very best land-based resorts.

Rather than list all the features and services I experienced during a week of cruising aboard this classy live-aboard, I will describe a typical dive:

Prior to the dive, an excellent description of the undersea topography, along with a chalkboard drawing of the site, is presented by our divemaster. When my buddy and I are ready to go, we sit on the bench in front of our designated tank (always filled to not less than 3,000 psi), retrieve our personal gear from our private bin beneath the seat and walk down the stairs to the spacious dive deck level. A divemaster hands me my fins (they are stowed behind a bar on the dive deck) and then my underwater camera once I have entered the sea. The dive is performed according to each buddy team; time and depth is monitored by each individual. (If you wish, you can request the assistance of a divemaster or the photo pro in the water.) With the proper dive plan and surface interval it is possible to log five dives daily.

After the dive, I return to the dive deck via dual ladders on either side of the platform (a safety stop is performed on the Peter Hughes-designed hangbar, an ingenious solid bar that can be lowered and raised beneath the aft hull). A divemaster is always on deck to take my camera, my fins and, later on the deck, my tank. After a warm, freshwater rinse from one of two shower heads on the dive deck, a warm fluffy terrycloth towel is draped across my shoulders. My camera, which has already been rinsed, is waiting for me on the carpeted, lippered camera table centered aft on the main deck. A second camera "soak" tank is underneath. On the table is a low pressure air gun, cotton-tipped swabs, O-ring lubricant, a camera tool kit and a bin for the daily E-6 (slide) processing run.

After drying off and stowing my personal gear (my tank will be filled for the next dive), I move into the air-conditioned main salon where coffee, sodas, juice, fruit, cheese crackers and other snacks await.

The rest of the day will be more diving, wonderful meals, an elective night dive, a nighttime slide presentation and a most pleasant sleep. My cabin, below the main deck, is a masterpiece of space and air-conditioned comfort, including oversized bunk, private head, shower and sink. Details include a personal bathrobe,



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WIND DANCER

a hair dryer, turn-down service with a chocolate on my pillow and daily early morning room service coffee.

Next to diving, meals aboard *Wind Dancer* are the highlight of the day: hot breakfasts cooked to order (or fruit, cereal, juice, etc.), sumptuous and ample lunchtime buffets and an impressive four course dinner, often featuring a choice of entree, served on an elegantly set table and wonderfully prepared by Jerra Harding, a professional chef. Red or white wine is served at all dinner meals. Drinks, including alcoholic, are included in the weekly package (with the advance notice that when you begin drinking you have stopped diving for the day).

The weekly dive itinerary is highly individual, determined by a combination of weather and guest request, and adjusted periodically. Popular dive areas include both the south and north coasts of Roatan (nearly continuous walls laced with caverns), Utila and Cayos Cochinos (excellent marine life) and the seamounts between Roatan and Cayos Cochinos (reef banks and pinnacles). Highlight sites visited during my week included **Valley of the Kings** (south coast Roatan), a sponge-filled fantasy; **Dolphins Den** (north coast Roatan), a maze of caverns filled with gleaming Silversides; **Toontown** (Cochinos), an encyclopedia of macro marine critters; and **Little Coco Seamount**, a pinnacle that's loaded with schooling fish.

If your image of life on a live-aboard dive vessel is crowded decks, narrow corridors, tiny cabins and stingy meals, then you have never had the cruise ship calibre of product and service provided on a Peter Hughes live-aboard. Life on *Wind Dancer*, for a maximum of 20 guests, is comparable to that experienced aboard a classy private yacht. A very friendly service oriented crew is led by Captain Linda Lupi, who is both a captain and a lady in the best sense of the words. Peter Hughes has incorporated 25 years of experience into the hundreds of delightful details aboard *Wind Dancer*, in the pristine Bay Islands of Honduras.

For more information, contact Peter Hughes Diving, Inc., at 1390 S. Dixie Highway, Suite 1109, Coral Gables, Florida 33146. Call (800) 9DANCER (800-923-6237), (305) 669-9391 or fax (305) 669-9475. You can visit on the Internet at www.peterhughes.com, e-mail dancer@peterhughes.com.

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You can choose from a variety of small hotels or cozy inns, comfortable places with modern amenities such as air-conditioning and satellite television. Nearly all of the accommodations are on the most inviting beaches you can imagine. The morning sun turns the white sand gold and makes the ripples on the calm water sparkle like diamonds. The beach beckons you to walk barefoot to breakfast, to wade in the warmth of the sea and savor the quiet peacefulness of Grand Turk.

The diving is world-class but you don't have to travel the world to get to it. In fact, the spectacular coral walls are hardly more than a stone's throw from the beach. Like everything else in Grand Turk, diving is a stress-free activity. Relax on the beach and the boat will come right to you. Step aboard with a few friends, old or new, and enjoy the five minute ride to the dive site. When you

Escape, Relax and Lose Your



roll over the side into the incredibly clear blue water, the reef will be perfectly visible only 30 or 40 feet below. Colorful reef fish such as Queen Triggerfish and silvery Horse-eye Jacks swim around you and curious Nassau Groupers watch you descend. The wall is the edge of Columbus Passage, where Humpback Whales pass the island on their annual migrations. The water here is the purest, deepest blue you have ever seen.

Mantas, Spotted Eagle Rays and sharks often





cruise these walls and you can follow their route effortlessly; diving here is like flying weightlessly through a vast canyon. Lush colonies of Black Coral, sheets of Plate Coral and enormous Orange Elephant Ear Sponges coat the wall, creating crevices that harbor thousands of fish and invertebrates. As you ascend over the edge of the wall and onto the shallow reef a whole other world welcomes you. Garden Eels greet you from their sandy patches, where tall mounds of coral rise toward the surface like small cities.

Set your own dive schedule on Grand Turk. Morning, afternoon or night, two tank or one tank. There are dozens of sites to see, such as

self in Peaceful Dreams...

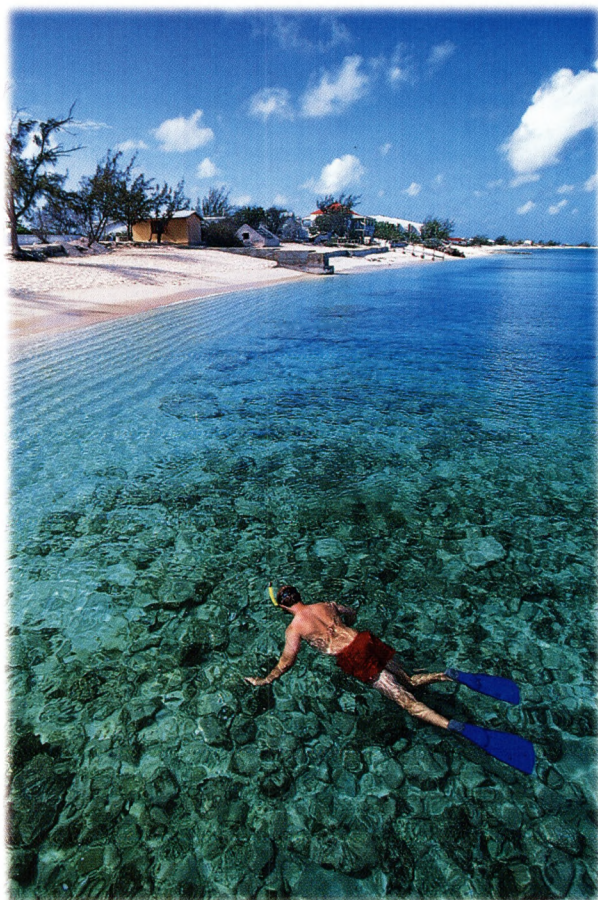
Black Forest, the Library and Coral Garden. Stay shallow, go deep or get some instruction. Bring a camera or rent one here. Spend your surface interval in a hammock or beach lounge with a cold drink in hand.

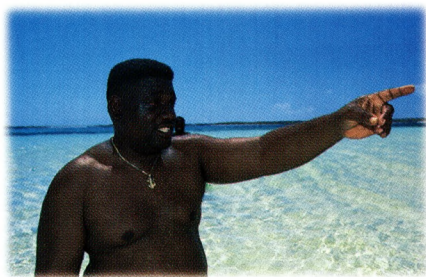
The favorite non-diving activity is relaxing on the beach with a good book but there is much more to do if you want. Rent a bike and pedal to the Grand Turk lighthouse or take a walk along Front Street for shopping and sightseeing. Tour the shipwreck and reef displays of the Turks and Caicos National Museum.

Restaurants on Grand Turk feature delicious food served informally in gracious beachfront or tropical garden settings. Choose from menus of fresh fish, choice beef, island cuisine or traditional fare. Relax and take in the sunset while you dine, then stick around to enjoy the live entertainment.

Don't forget about Grand Turk's historic sister island, Salt Cay. The short flight over is as easy as hailing a taxi. Above water, Salt Cay offers a unique look at life when producing salt was the mainstay of these islands. Below water there are more fabulous walls, superb shallow reefs and the fascinating wreck of the Endemion.

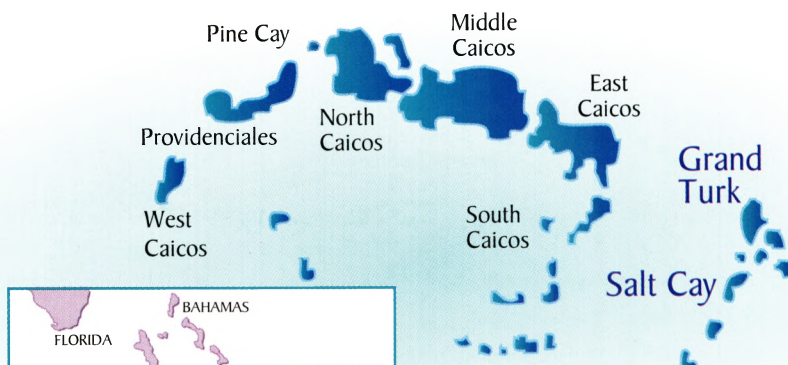
Escape to Grand Turk where you will be welcomed home at last.





Escape to Sunray Beach

Sunray Beach is Grand Turk's secret getaway, a small island reserved for nature and you. As Minister of Tourism Oswald Skippings points out, Sunray Beach is picture perfect, with flawless white sand, clear water and soul-warming sun. Escape for the afternoon to Sunray Beach and feed the stingrays, snorkel the shallow reef, play volleyball, sample the barbecue and fresh conch salad or just soak up nature. Come when you want, Sunray Beach will be waiting for you.



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Dive Notes

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Deep Week will offer divers the following: decompression diving to 220 feet with full technical support; deco gas available up to 80 percent; advanced technical and nitrox diving and instruction; full technical certification; staged decompression diving; and extended range diving and certification.

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To receive more information or to book a Deep Week adventure, call Aggressor Fleet at (800) 348-2628 or (504) 385-2628; fax (504) 384-0817; e-mail divboat@compuserve.com. You can visit the Web site at www.aggressor.com.

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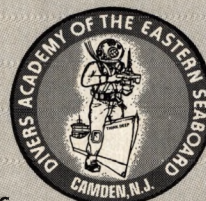
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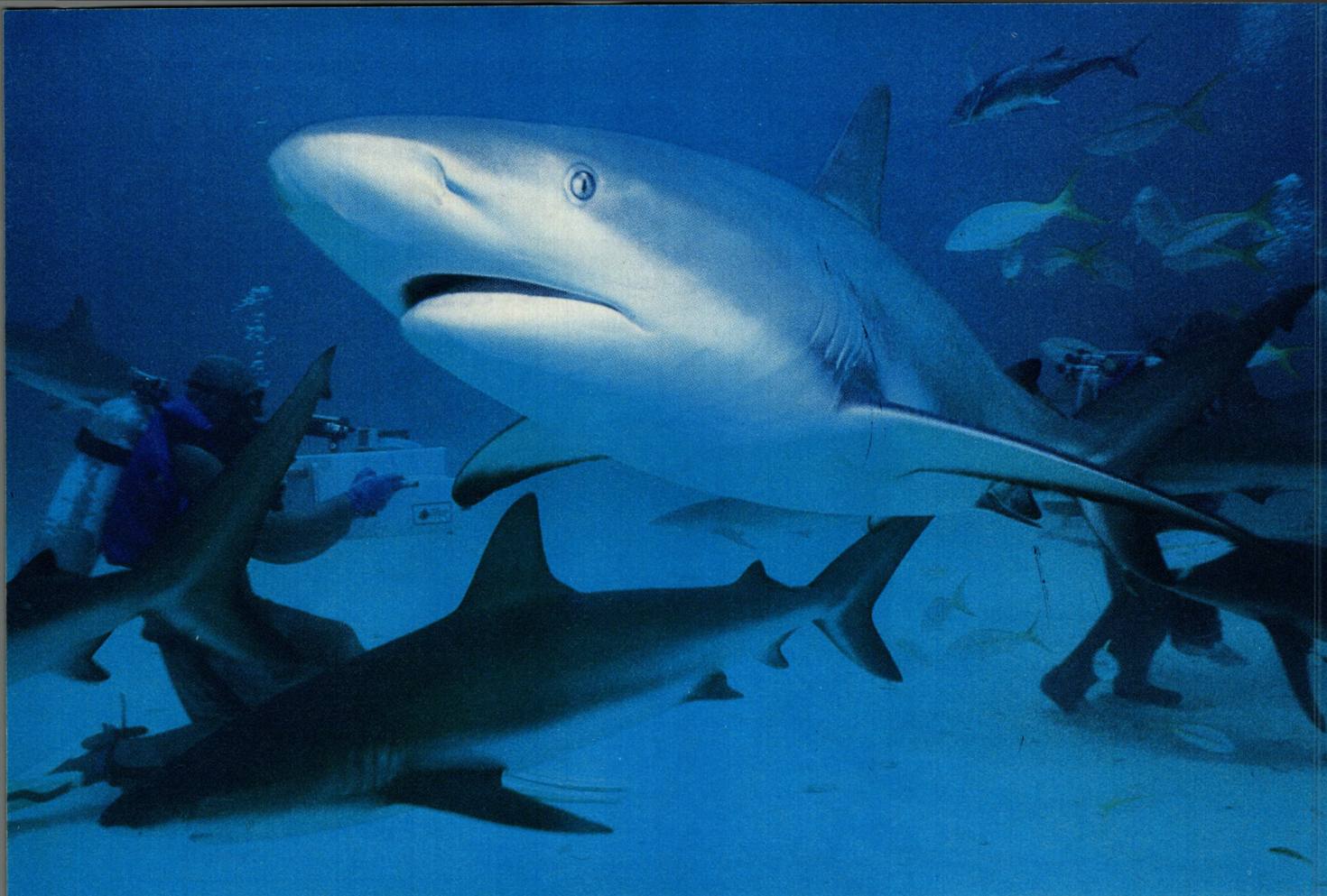
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Oh, What a Thrill!



SHARK, DOLPHIN AND WRECK DIVES IN THE BAHAMAS WITH UNEXSO

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY BONNIE J. CARDONE

The Underwater Explorers Society boat left the dock with a full load. There were 14 of us; 10 guests, 1 shark feeder, 2 safety divers and 1 videographer. It was pretty obvious who was staff and who wasn't; the staff was donning stainless steel chainmail suits. The guests, on the other hand, were notable for their warm water dress (most of us wore only nylon/Lycra skins) and multitude of cameras. We had already seen a video of a **Shark Dive** and received a briefing of what to expect, along with dos

and don'ts. Now we were actually going to dive with Caribbean Reef Sharks and watch a UNEXSO staffer handfeed them.

We pulled up to the site and tied off to the buoy, then, one by one, we entered the water. From the surface we could see sharks lazily cruising below us. We descended to the bottom at 45 feet. When everyone was U/W, a safety diver led us to the feeding site and we arranged ourselves in a semi-circle with our backs to what's left of an old hyperbaric chamber. The sharks were already finning lazily by.

Stingrays, groupers, jacks and Yellowtail Snappers were also in attendance. We all knew what was going to happen and nobody—the denizens of the deep included—wanted to miss anything!

I was on one end of the line, with a friend, Mike, on my right, a safety diver on my left. Noting we were all settled, the feeder began pulling whole dead fish out of a special container. Each fish was snapped up immediately! The feeder moved up and down in front of us, giving everyone a great view of the action. The

videographer and the sharks—I counted 18—a ray or two and a multitude of Yellowtails and jacks circled him. It was a movable feast and an U/W circus all in one! I was amazed at the size of the sharks—some were at least eight feet long. Seeing them in action only a few feet in front of me left no doubt of their power. The sharks, however, showed absolutely no interest in anything except the food.

All too soon it was over. I had shot two rolls of film and spent several entrancing minutes just watching when the feeder shuffled off to my left, taking the circus with him. In a few minutes, calm prevailed and only the divers were left. At a signal from one of the safety divers, we filed off to the ascent line and returned to the boat. My computer showed a bottom time of 47 minutes—wow, had time passed quickly!

The Shark Dive was certainly one of the highlights of our stay at UNEXSO and several of us have the souvenir video (\$35, available a few minutes after each dive at the Photo and Video Centre) that documents our participation (it's guaranteed *not* to bore family and friends!). The Shark Dive, however, is not the only wonderful adventure UNEXSO has to offer. Our weekend package also included a Dolphin Dive and Theo's Wreck.

I had wanted to experience the **Dolphin Dive** since it was introduced in 1990, so this was the fulfillment of a dream. As Mike would later enthusiastically remark, "It was a hoot!" Leaving the UNEXSO dock, we traveled to Sanctuary Bay by boat to pick up dolphin trainers, Veronica and Chris, and the dolphins, Robalo and

Kyla. We also got a briefing on what to expect and learned some handsignals that would bring the dolphins to us. As we cruised out to the dive site, the dolphins followed another boat running next to ours. If we had brought topside cameras we would have gotten great shots of the dolphins jumping and otherwise cavorting between the two boats—they seemed to be having a wonderful time!

On the site, the nine of us descended to the bottom and settled upon the sand at 44 feet. The dolphins and their trainers

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Have you or any of your friends always wanted to scuba dive in the clear water of the tropics? Learn to Dive Vacations by UNEXSO could be the answer. This exciting and innovative beginning diver training program allows you to learn the basics of diving at home, using state of the art video based training materials or a complete CD-ROM multimedia instructional system. Then, on Grand Bahama Island, students spend three days learning diving skills and diving local reefs.

The water skills are learned in UNEXSO's outdoor pools, one of which is 18 feet deep. The dives are conducted from boats on shallow and medium depth reefs. When the water work and dives have been successfully completed, students receive their open water certification cards, good worldwide.

The cost for the UNEXSO Learn to Dive Vacation is \$385 and includes all training materials, use of equipment and diving.

made the rounds, making sure everyone had plenty of time with each animal. All of us got to touch and feed the dolphins, received several dolphin kisses and were spun in circles by the dolphins.

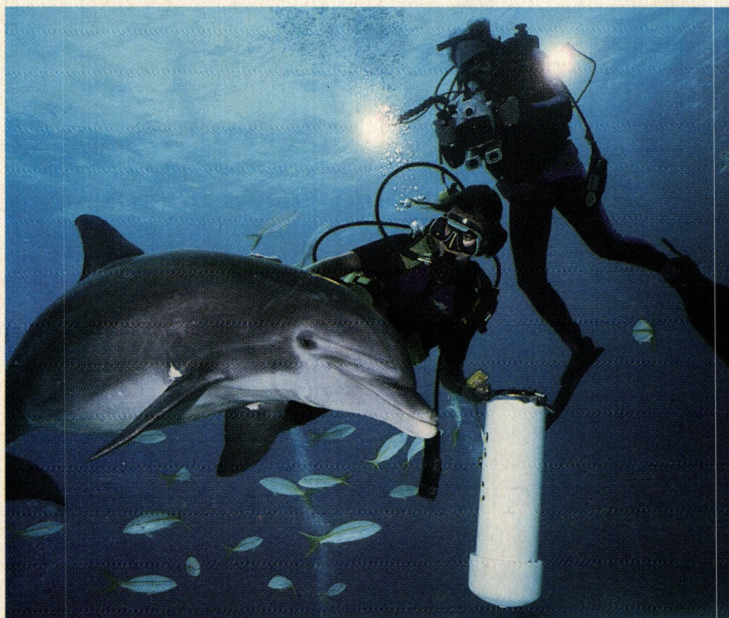
Did we buy the souvenir video of this dive? You bet!

The third dive on our weekend agenda was **Theo's Wreck**. Intentionally sunk as a dive attraction for UNEXSO, the wreck is 228 feet long. She lies on her port side in 100 feet of water but divers can stay as shallow as 80 feet and still see most of her.

The divers gear up and enter the water, then a guide leads the group down to the wreck along a line. Theo's has been made very accessible to divers. There are large cargo holds and compartments to swim into and out of, some containing Glassy Sweepers. Since the wreck has been down for 15 years, she has considerable marine growth—including colorful gorgonians—and lots of fish. The various structures and machinery provide great photo ops and sightseeing.

At the end of the dive, guests swim along the top of the wreck to the ascent line. For safety's sake, there's a spare tank with regulator tied to the line near the surface. Be forewarned: You are very likely to find one dive on Theo's Wreck is not enough. There is so much to see you'll probably want to return.

UNEXSO offers very reasonable dive packages, including air travel, that range from two nights/three dives to seven nights/nine dives in length. There is a choice of six hotels. The packages include breakfast at the Brass Helmet (UNEXSO's restaurant/bar), as well as tanks,



Top left: The Shark Dive is a movable feast and an exciting U/W circus all in one. **Left:** Pelican Bay Resort's freshwater pool offers a relaxing interlude between dives. **Above:** The Dolphin Dive provides upclose encounters. A videographer films the action for a TV show. **Right:** Vici Storm dives Theo's Wreck.



photo/Mike Storm

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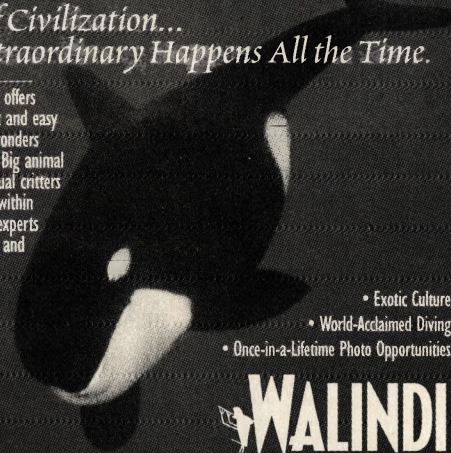


photo/Tammy Peluso

Enchanting Walindi Plantation offers divers the comforts of a resort and easy access to all the underwater wonders PNG has become famous for. Big animal encounters are common, unusual critters are everywhere and the reefs within Kimbe Bay are considered by experts to be among the most diverse and beautiful in the world.



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UNEXSO

weights and weightbelt.

We stayed at Pelican Bay Resort, opened just last year and a five minute stroll from UNEXSO. Our air-conditioned rooms were spacious, very nicely furnished and all had balconies or patios that overlook the very pleasant pool/spa and bar area. We transported our gear to the boat the first day, then put down a deposit for a lock (you get your money back when you return the lock) and stored our gear in a UNEXSO dock locker. Tanks, weights and belts are available from the dive center, which has a freshwater rinse tank right in front of it.

Although Pelican Bay does not have a restaurant, guests can always get a meal or a snack at the Brass Helmet. And, a five minute walk farther is the Port Lucaya Market Place, which has numerous restaurants. (On the way there you'll pass the Straw Market, which is a great place to shop for native crafts.)

UNEXSO is in Port Lucaya, on the southwest end of Grand Bahama Island, a little more than 100 miles from Miami, Florida. The flight between Miami International Airport and Freeport takes about 40 minutes. UNEXSO is about a 15 minute taxi ride (taxis are cheap) from the Freeport airport.

For more information on UNEXSO's dive packages call (800) 992-DIVE (3483). You can also write to P.O. Box 22878, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33335, call (954) 351-9889 or fax (954) 351-9740. In The Bahamas call (242) 373-1244 or fax (242) 373-8956.

Dive Notes

MORE FLIGHTS TO THE SOLOMON ISLANDS: Solomon Airlines' flights to and from the Solomon Islands via Nadi have increased from one to two per week.

Flights will arrive in Honiara via Nadi Tuesdays and Sundays, and return Tuesdays and Saturdays. This is in addition to flights via Auckland, Vila, Port Moresby and Brisbane.

Rick Belmare of Bilikiki Cruises says the live-aboards *Bilikiki* and *Spirit of Solomons* will be running 7, 9, 11 and 13 night charters in line with the new schedules, with no overnights required in Honiara.

For more details on departures with Bilikiki Cruises, phone (800) 663-5363, fax (250) 383-6598 or e-mail bilikiki@horizon.bc.ca.

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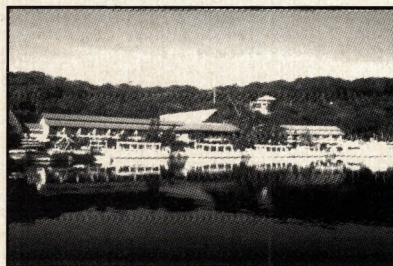


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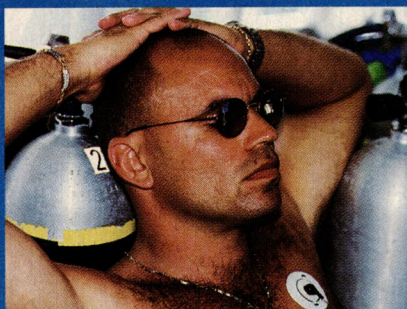
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Delving into the Depths

PIPIN'S DIVE TO 500 FEET TESTS THE LIMITS OF HUMAN POTENTIAL

BY TAMARA COLLINS
PHOTOS BY WAYNE HASSON



Pipin was unfazed by the chaos of the news media, support staff and well-wishers that crowded around the *Cayman Aggressor III* in George Town Harbour, Grand Cayman. He would need to remain in this concentrated, trance-like state to withstand the next few minutes of intense pressure, apnea and physiological changes that would challenge his will to live. Straddling the crossbar of a weighted sled, he breathed quickly and deeply for a few minutes, filling his lungs with 8.2 liters of air (twice the capacity of the average human), clipped his nose shut and began his descent into the unknown.

It took exactly 3 minutes and 18 seconds on that windy day in the Carib-

bean to accomplish what he had trained for nearly his whole life—to discover the limits of human potential. Consequently, he broke his own world record no limits dive to 436 feet set November 26, 1996, in Baja California. On this day, May 31, 1997, he took a deep breath at the surface, another at a tank placed at 300 feet and then plunged through the dark, still waters to 500 feet.

The pressure at 500 feet, approximately 222 psia, would have crushed a WWII submarine. Until Pipin's predecessors and mentors, Enzo Maiorca and Jacques Mayol, began their freediving forays in the '60s, physiologists believed the pressure below 325 feet would crush a human's chest. But humans possess an atrophied capability present in all marine mammals—blood shift. As Pipin reached the extreme depths that would collapse the air filled pockets in his body, blood was forced from his extremities into his

Pipin's variable ballast sled propels him to 500 feet, where he set a world record no limits freedive. Inset above: Electrodes monitor Pipin's heart rate as he readies himself for his dive.

lungs, filling them with the incompressible liquid that would protect them from the potentially lethal water pressure.

Physiology may have counteracted the dangerous affects of pressure, but Pipin would have to rely on his mind and will to control the need to breathe. The apnea he had to sustain for more than three minutes (with the brief reprieve of one breath at 300 feet) severely limited the amount of oxygen available to sustain his body functions. To conserve energy for his vital organs, Pipin has trained his mind to slow the rhythm of his heart. Ultimately, he slowed his heart to 14 beats per minute (the average human's heart beats 70 times per minute), conserving the oxygen in his blood for his heart, lungs and cerebral cortex.



Pipin's broad smile tells of a triumphant return from a world record breaking 500 foot dive.

At 400 feet, Pipin passed the support divers who had volunteered for the duty of monitoring his progress. For the next 100 feet he was alone in his silent struggle, until he reached 500 feet, where Grand Cayman's *Atlantis Submarine* waited to document the momentous occasion. At the end of his journey, he let go of the sled that had taken him to speeds of up to nine feet per second and released the liftbag that rocketed him to the sun-warmed surface, where anxious bystanders were holding their breath in anticipation of his return.

Cuban born Francisco "Pipin" Ferreras has made this triumphant return many times in his 35 years. He became adept at spearfishing in Cuban waters and became an excellent freediving hunter, as well as a member of the national spearfishing team.

It was in Italy in the 1980s that he met freediving legends Enzo Maiorca and Jacques Mayol. They introduced him to the controversial variable ballast no limits diving, which has been labeled applied experimentation by the World Underwater Federation (WUF) and Confederation Mondiale Activities Subaquatiques (CMAS).

In 1989, Pipin became a world record no limits freediver with a plunge to 369.6 feet. He and Italian Umberto Pelizzari have exchanged that esteemed title numerous times over the last eight years.

Pipin's next journey may be to Japan, where he will attempt to ride his sled into the deep waters off Okinawa, plummeting to an astounding depth of 600 feet. 🐟

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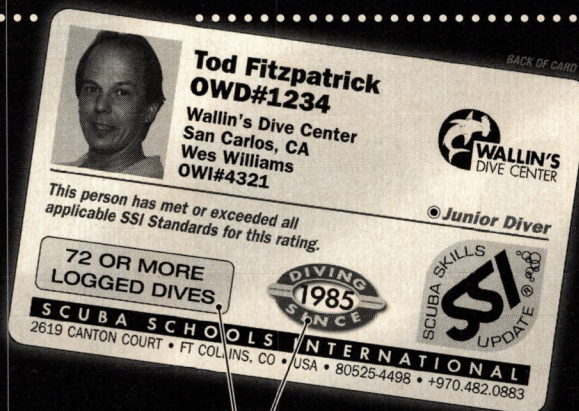
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Meltron's Stratus BC

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT, COMFORT AND BACK FLOTATION

BY JIM WALKER
PHOTOS BY BONNIE J. CARDONE

Traditional BC designs place the air chambers around the torso, which suits many divers perfectly. However, some divers prefer more freedom in an open design, with the flotation chambers at the back, beside the scuba tank. While such back flotation units have been around for a long time, few can achieve the level of comfort provided by Meltron's Stratus. Combining tremendous freedom of movement with tank stabilization, full adjustability and a rugged, low profile design, the Stratus fits like an old friend—the kind who knows how to stay out of your way. And, this comfort remains the same, with the air chamber empty or inflated to the full 50 pounds of lift!

The backmounted, horseshoe shaped air chamber can offer such tremendous lift and remain low profile because of its advanced engineering. As the inner, polyurethane bladder inflates in its zipper-accessed envelope, it expands backward, around the tank, by stretching elastic mesh. The front half of the envelope doesn't expand, as it is made of tough, 420 denier nylon (as is the rest of the BC). This

material not only doesn't stretch, it protects the front, "business" side of the air bladder.

The tank is stabilized by a shroud of double layer nylon and secured by two nylon webbing tank bands with cam-action buckles and touch-fastener closures. This stable tank cradle (and its nylon carry strap) is an integral part of the padded, flexible, saddle-like BC harness that encloses the diver's torso.

The harness sys-



Top right: Meltron's Stratus is a back flotation BC offering freedom of movement and an integrated weight system. Pulling the yellow straps on the integrated weight pockets (left), opens them (above), dumping the weights.

tem features several adjustments. First, it secures via a wide, padded, touch-fastener closing cummerbund (removable). Outside the cummerbund, the front panels of the harness are held in place by an adjustable nylon webbing strap with a quick-release buckle. The shoulder straps are also wide and padded. Not only are they adjustable, with quick-release buckles, they can be removed completely, via additional quick-release buckles at the back of the harness. If desired, the diver can secure the two shoulder straps across the chest with an adjustable webbing strap (removable). Because of the removable shoulder straps and cummerbund, any given BC size (M, L, XL) can be customized to suit an individual diver's torso length and circumference.

One of the best features of the Stratus is its integrated weight pockets. On each side of the BC, behind the large accessory pock-

et, there is a zipper accessed pocket, accommodating up to 15 pounds of weight (30 pounds total). These weight pockets can be instantly dumped by the diver or a rescuer by yanking down on the bright yellow webbing straps, which pull away touch-fastener tabs and open the bottoms of the pockets. By taking some or all of the weight off the weight-

COMPARISON OF MELTRON BUOYANCY COMPENSATORS

Model	Stratus	Cirrus
Price	\$350.00	\$219.99
Material	420 denier nylon, with polyurethane bladder in elastic mesh	420 denier nylon, polyurethane coated
Inflator	Power/manual	Power/manual
Sizes/Lift (pounds)	M/50 L/50 XL/50	S/25 M/33 L/42 XL/46
Colors	Black or black with blue trim	Black, blue/black or silver/black
Comments	A full featured, back flotation BC with pockets for integrated weights. Replaceable shoulder straps and cummerbund allow custom fit.	An all-purpose BC with the flotation chambers at the waist and behind the back. Plenty of adjustment and comfort features.

USER COMMENTS

Open and free: "The cummerbund and shoulder straps are the only parts of the Stratus around your torso, so you have complete freedom for arm movement and chest expansion."

No slop: "The excellent arrangement of the harness system, and its total adjustability, give the Stratus a secure, no slop fit that is both comfortable and supports the scuba tank securely."

Integrated weights: "Placing the weights in the same location as the flotation is a logical enhancement to proper balance underwater. Having no strain on the lower back is also appreciated."

belt, the integrated system increases comfort, reduces back strain and adds stability because flotation and weight are in the same place.

The Stratus has a combination power/manual inflator attached to the left shoulder via a corrugated hose. (The

hose secures to the left shoulder strap with a touch-fastener closure.) Air can be vented from the BC manually, by holding the inflator over the head and pressing the end button. It can also be vented by pulling down on the hose, which opens an overpressure/dump valve where the hose attaches to the shoulder. A second overpressure valve is on the back, bottom right of the air chamber. The attached pull cord allows it to be used as a manual dump when the diver is in a head-down position.

In addition to the large, touch-fastener closing accessory pockets, the Stratus offers other extras. There are two large,

stainless steel D-rings and four Delrin D-rings for attaching accessories. Using the D-ring above the right pocket, a clip-on hose fastener (supplied) secures the octopus second stage. The D-ring inside the right pocket can be used as an attachment point for keys.

Providing all the extras in a rugged, open design, the Stratus BC definitely lets you put discomfort behind you. It is available in all black or black with blue trim, as shown here and has a suggested retail price of \$350. For more information or the name of your nearest Meltron dealer, call Dura Pro Systems at (800) 345-6634. 🐙

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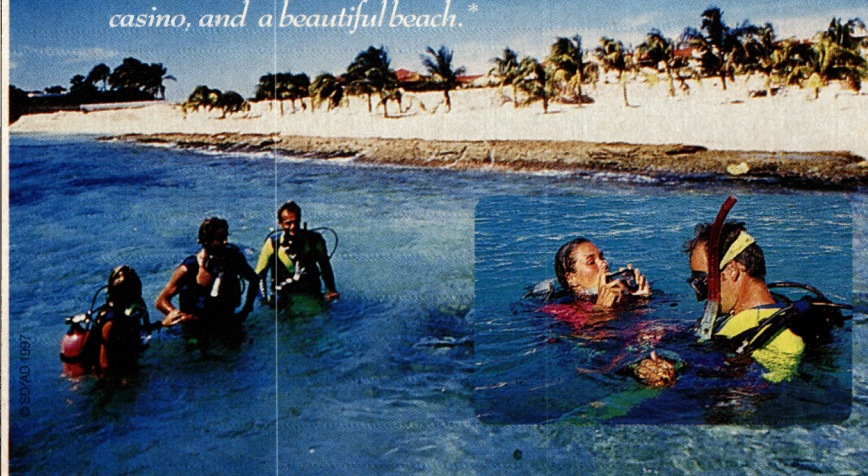
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TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY AL HORNSBY



Above: A diver discovers a large *Tridacna* clam at German Channel. **Below:** Palau Pacific Resort has 160 rooms with garden and ocean views.

One of my favorite dive trip memories is sitting at a small table in a high back rattan chair—one of those with a round top that looks like a throne. My friend and I are alone on a long, curving sand beach and the water laps gently at the shoreline, just steps away.

We are watching one of the most majestic sunsets we've ever seen: the sky is streaked with orange, violet and rays of soft pink. And, right at horizon's edge, a perfect small island, crowned with a coconut palm, makes a flawless tropical silhouette.

As we sip champagne and nibble hors d'oeuvres, we chat about the day, especially that unbelievable first dive at **Blue Corner**. The adrenaline high of being right there as 20 to 30 Gray Reef Sharks passed back and forth, just an arm's length away, still gave us a shiver. And, when the Napoleon Wrasse, more than three feet long and absolutely unafraid, came up to us, it seemed he was more fascinated with us than we were with him!

As the sunset deepened toward a velvet, star-sprinkled night, we feasted on island delicacies: fresh tuna sashimi, lobster, crab and tropical fruit.

I realize this doesn't sound like your every day dive trip, and I guess it's not. But,

it's a very typical evening at one of the world's great dive destinations—Palau Pacific Resort in the marvelous Rock Islands of Palau.

As most seasoned divers know, Palau is in the Western Pacific, in a region known as Micronesia. The 340 islands that make up the archipelago lie sprinkled over 400 miles of warm blue ocean, just southeast of the Philippines. It is a bit more than an eight hour flight, via Guam, by Continental Micronesia jet from Honolulu. Without question one of the most celebrated dive areas on the planet, Palau's lagoons, walls and reef passes are filled with the tropical ocean's most beautiful, unusual and exciting creatures.

It's the kind of place where no two dives—even if in the same place—are ever alike. There are sharks, turtles, mantas and big tuna. In some spots, schooling fish gather by the thousands. Beautiful soft corals and huge gorgonian fans reach out from sheer walls and calm, sleepy lagoons are filled with delicate hard corals of every description. There are drift dives, marine grottos, wall dives—I guess you get the picture. And, to top it all off, the water is clear—the visibility is normally 100 feet or more—and warm, usually about 84°F.

Even with all this, great dive vacations require more than great sites. There are those little things, such as a comfortable place to stay, good food and convenient, quality dive services. Well, this is where Palau Pacific Resort (PPR) comes in—it provides all that and more.

The resort sits on its own private beach, on a secluded, fully landscaped property covering 64 acres. One hundred sixty rooms, with ocean and garden views, are decorated in modern island motif and their comfort, taste and accommodations rival any luxury resort. PPR's overall style might be described as the complete tropical getaway,



without sacrificing the conveniences of modern living, or the ability to stay in touch with the real world (if you must!).

As for the food, well, let's just say PPR's resident chef makes sure you won't waste away. With the Garden Terrace restaurant overlooking the beach and pool, the Medu Ribtal gourmet restaurant and the Mesekiu Beach bar, there are plenty of choices, from haute cuisine to American burgers, from European to local and Asian dishes. And, each morning's huge breakfast buffet and each evening's special theme buffet make deciding easy—you simply try them all. Then, there's that private table on the beach; the special King and Queen dinner. It's like nothing else, definitely one for the memory book.

When you are not diving, there's plenty to do. A full gym, tennis courts, pool and hottubs, little sailboats, beach volleyball, or just a hammock under a coconut palm are all available. Of course, there are the other conveniences of laundry, babysitting, specialty shops, beauty parlor and the like.

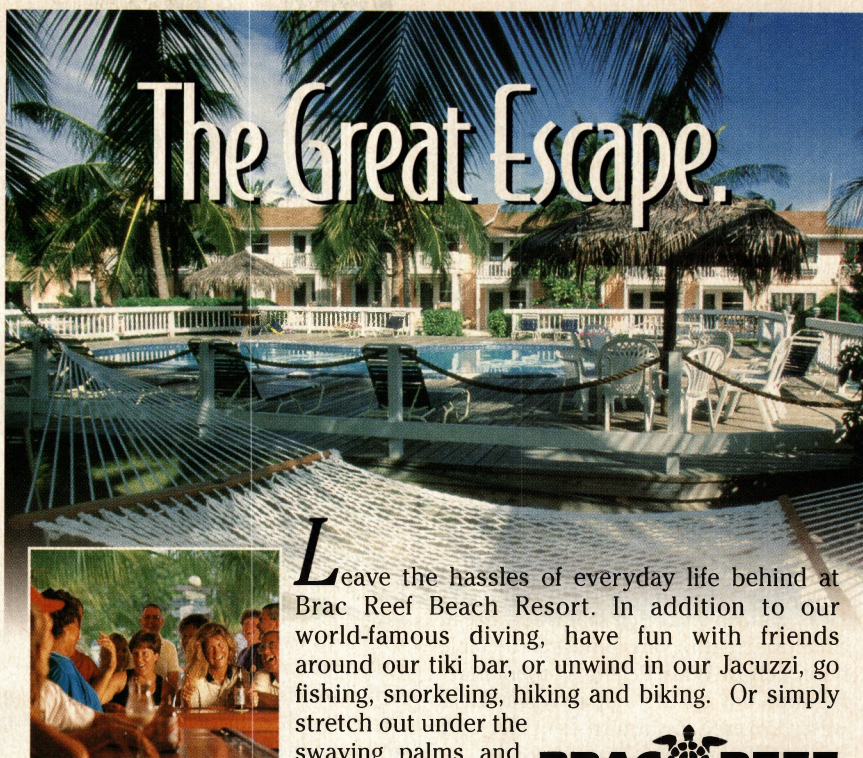
Even with all this, however, you do visit Palau for the diving. And for that, PPR's services step up another notch. With its own PADI Five Star Dive Center, Splash, just steps from the rooms, and its own dock and boats, diving with PPR is utterly convenient.

Splash is a modern, fully equipped dive center with the full range of services, training, equipment sales and rentals. Your gear is loaded and unloaded from the boats for you, then washed and stored at the dive center (there's no need to schlep dripping gear back to your room).

The operation's boats are unique in Palau, with the original (also named *Splash*) having set a new standard for comfort when it was introduced several years ago. A 42 foot long aluminum jet drive craft, *Splash*, carries 18 divers. It has lots of shade (and dry places), equipment and camera prep areas, showers and restrooms. Its 24 knot speed allows it to reach the more distant dive sites around Peleliu with ease.

The second boat, *Mesekiu*, is a 32 foot, catamaran style craft for 12 divers. Its wide beam, shallow draft and 30 knot speed make it fast and stable; its design creates a smoothly functional dive platform, with showers, heads, equipment storage and camera prep table.

And, if you require even more dive services, PPR also has Photo Palau, a professional photo and video center on the hotel grounds near Splash. Managed by well-known pros Bert and Jan Yates, Photo Palau has everything needed to capture Palau's incredible visual array. From film processing to repairs, rentals, personal videos (starring you, of course) and instruction, you need not leave Palau without plenty of pictures of your experience.



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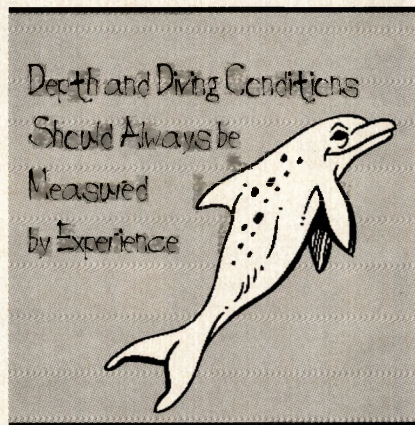
The dive program at PPR is normally two dives per day, with lunch (usually on a remote beach near the outer reefline) and special snorkel stops at some unique places several times each week. The range and number of sites is amazing, with many of Palau's favorites making anyone's list of "The world's best dives."

There's Blue Corner of course, and the **Blue Holes**, where holes in the top of the reef flat widen into large caverns that spill out onto a sheer wall at 90 feet. **New Drop-off** has pink ball anemones lining the wall and huge schools of Black Snappers and Barracuda milling about by the thousands. **Peleliu Wall's** Black Coral bushes grow in profusion and sharks cut in and out through schools of Horse-eye Jacks. Sailfish and other fantastic, once in a lifetime sightings are almost predictable here. **Yellow Wall**, Peleliu's other amazing spot, has a sheer wall, in crystal clear water, covered for hundreds of feet with bright yellow sponges and cup corals.

If that's not enough, there's **German Channel**, where schools of Batfish follow you around like long-lost buddies and huge Manta Rays give you the curious once-over; **Big Drop-off**, where huge gorgonian fans and brilliantly colored soft corals sway in the current; or snorkeling at **Jellyfish Lake**, where several million non-stinging jellyfish pulse around you, creating a visual scene absolutely unique to your senses.

Indeed, Palau is one of diving's must do trips and just what the diving experience is all about. And, PPR is what a vacation resort should be: comfortable, pampering and exotic. Together, they are, without a doubt, one of diving's great combinations.

For more information on Palau and the Palau Pacific Resort, contact Tropical Adventures Travel, (800) 723-4530, (206) 441-3483 (WA). You can send e-mail to dive@divetropical.com.



Food and Fitness

BY FRED BOVE, M.D., PH.D.

I was running along a favorite trail recently, when I came upon a longtime friend. We ran together to catch up on events and, during our conversation, the subject fell to nutrition. He was trying to sort out a large amount of information he had researched about diets. These are usually described for specific goals (body building, lowering cholesterol and weight loss), often by advocates of a specific diet method, with little information upon which to base an informed decision about what and how much to eat. In trying to learn about healthy eating, my friend had become increasingly confused.

I note similar confusion among my patients when they ask about a new diet, vitamin or food supplement that is being discussed in the press. I try to provide them with nutritional guidelines that can be used on a long term basis, not for a short term specific goal, such as rapid weight reduction. Reasonable nutritional goals can be achieved without going to extremes.

To start on a good nutrition program, the basic structure and calorie value of foods need to be understood. Physics texts define a calorie as the amount of energy needed to raise the temperature of a gram of water one degree centigrade; a kilocalorie is the amount of energy needed to raise the temperature of a kilogram of water one degree centigrade. In food science, the kilocalorie is referred to as one Calorie (with a capital "C").

Energy requirements for a day's worth of activity depend on the amount of work you do, your age, body size and metabolic rate. An average man doing a day's work in an office uses about 30 Calories per kilogram (13.6 Calories per pound) of body weight; an average woman uses about 25 Calories per kilogram (11.4 Calories per pound) of body weight per day. Individuals who have jobs requiring physical exertion have higher energy demands. Most dietitians recommend a balance of 20

percent protein, 30 percent fat and 50 percent carbohydrate for daily energy needs. Table 1 shows the distribution of calories for a 160 pound man and a 110 pound woman, both leading sedentary lives.

The amount of each nutrient in grams is provided for the same calorie distribution in Table 2 (below). If you want to reduce the amount of fat in your diet, you need to replace the calories with another food

type. In most low fat foods, the substitute is carbohydrate in the form of sugar, but the proportions often leave you with the same or a greater number of calories. It is ironic that a high carbohydrate diet can cause an elevation of triglycerides (fats) in the blood and can have an effect opposite to what

is expected from the diet change.

If you are contemplating a special diet, you should determine whether there is adequate information to justify a large deviation from the recommended balance of foods. Although requirements for essential fatty acids (the building blocks of fat) are only one to two percent of total caloric intake, a very low fat diet may deprive you of these essential fatty acids and cause a loss of normal nutritional requirements. If you are concerned about blood fats and the risk for atherosclerosis, a modest reduction of saturated fat (animal fats and tropical oils such as coconut and palm) in the diet might be reasonable but, in some individuals, excess carbohydrates and fats can raise blood lipid levels.

A long distance runner training daily will require a high calorie intake, which is usually made up of increased carbohydrates.

If you reduce total food intake below your daily energy needs, you will lose weight. This might be the best way to improve your health and reduce fats in the blood, as many overweight individuals have elevated blood lipid levels. Maintaining an ideal body weight by moderation in total food intake, while following the recommended balance of food components, is still the best and safest means

**TABLE 1
DAILY CALORIE NEEDS**

	Wgt. (lbs.)	Total Cals.	Fat 30%	Carb. 50%	Protein 20%
Man	160	2,182	655	1,091	436
Woman	110	1,250	375	625	250

**TABLE 2
DAILY FOOD NEEDS**

	Wgt. (lbs.)	Total Cals.	Gms. Fat	Gms. Carb.	Gms. Protein
Man	160	2,182	73	273	109
Woman	110	1,250	42	156	63

of achieving a healthy lifestyle. When you perform a greater amount of work, you can compensate by increasing food intake to obtain additional energy.

To be ready for the demands of diving, you should add an exercise program to your nutritional program. A rough rule of thumb is a mile traveled on foot consumes about 100 calories of energy regardless of the time it takes. A cup of dry cereal or a cup of one percent milk is equivalent to 100 calories. So, a two mile walk will account for most of the calories in your breakfast. If you are aware of your usual daily dietary needs and add as your activity dictates, you should maintain a stable weight and be ready for the physical demands of diving.

FYI: If you would like to review some of the past Diving Medicine articles and other commentary on diving medicine, check out our Web page at www.scuba.med.com.

If you are looking for a medical text on diving, the newest edition of our textbook *Diving Medicine* has just been published (W.B. Saunders, Philadelphia). You can order it through your local book store. The suggested retail price is about \$65. 🐟

Note: Dietitian Fran Burke, M.S., R.D., provided advice and review for this article.

Dive Notes

SAFETY RECALL ON SOURCE-12 BATTERIES: Effective immediately, in cooperation with the Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC), Light & Motion Industries, 300 Cannery Row, Monterey, California, has issued a safety warning on all Source-12 batteries purchased between January 1990 and September 1996. If the battery pack floods during a dive, the battery could overheat later while above water and catch fire.

In the event of a flood, it is important to disassemble the retaining ring and bulkhead from the battery, in order to remove the circuit board. By doing so, you will prevent possible ignition of the battery pack. For instructions, contact Light & Motion immediately. Light & Motion Industries strongly recommends you send the battery back for replacement and to discuss lighting upgrade options.

The battery packs, measuring seven by four inches, are black with a clear top and were sold in the following models: SeaHawk Pro Package; SeaBlaze Dual EX; SeaBlaze Single EX; SeaBlaze Single Light; and SeaBlaze Specular Film Light.

Questions regarding the recall can be directed to Light & Motion Industries at (408) 645-1525, fax (408) 375-2517 or e-mail sales@lmiindustries.com. 🐟

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SKIN DIVER DECEMBER 1997 91

The Eagle Has Landed

EL AGUILA IS ROATAN'S NEWEST WRECK



photo/courtesy Photo Roatan

Top: A diver circles the bow of *El Aguila*, a 220 foot supply freighter that rests in 100 feet of water off Bailey's Key on Roatan's north coast. **Above:** *El Aguila* just prior to her sinking by Anthony's Key Resort owners, the Galindo family.

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICK FREHSEE

Out of a blue haze it appears—the silhouette of a huge ship. Gradually the details come into view—two tall masts, a two story wheelhouse and a cargo hold big enough to swallow a whale. Her name suddenly appears in huge dark blue letters against a still white hull—*El Aguila*. Where did it come from, what about the crew, what ports did it call on and why did it sink?

Swimming over and through a large intact shipwreck is an adventure in discovering man's loss and nature's gain. Such is the case of *El Aguila* (Spanish for the Eagle)—the newest shipwreck in the Bay Islands and one of the most dramatic and fun dive sites in the Western Caribbean. In this case, however, the newly christened AKR *Aguila* is destined to become better known than the ship that it was. This is because it lies only three minutes from the dock of Anthony's Key Resort, one of the most popular dedicated dive resorts in the Bay Islands of Honduras.

El Aguila was a 220 foot by 36 foot supply freighter registered in San Andres (Colombia), whose regular port throughout the 1980s was Puerto Cortes, Honduras, one of the largest cargo supply depots in Central America. In September of 1989, she took on



a cargo of 30,000 bags of cement bound for Haiti. Problems developed early at sea; a bad situation turned worse as *El Aguila* approached the Utila Cays. To save the vessel from sinking, the captain ran it up on a bank between Ragged Caye and Water Caye. (There is also a rumor that the mostly Haitian crew may have intentionally sabotaged *El Aguila* wishing to gain political asylum in Honduras.)

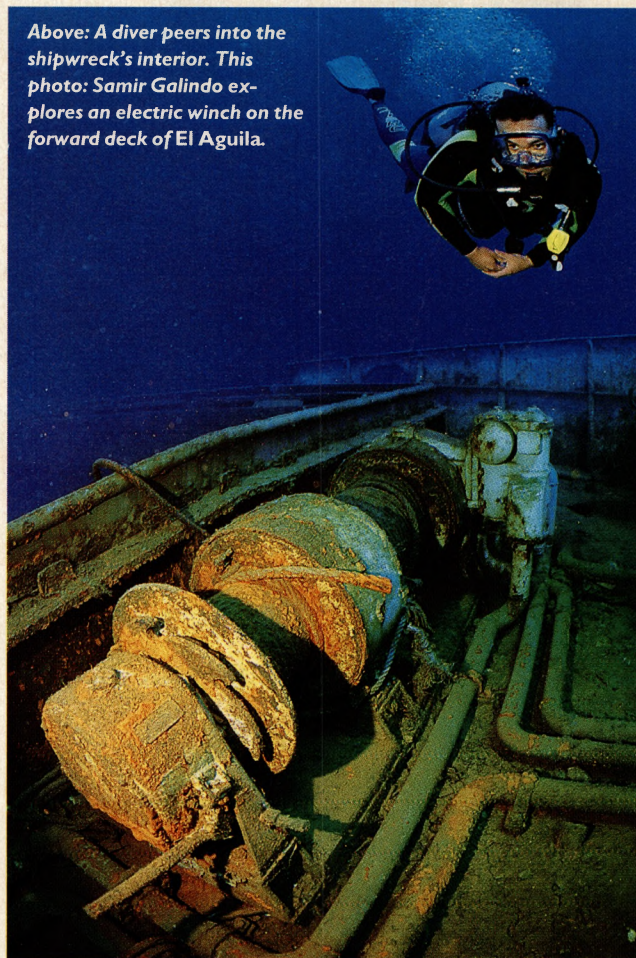
Salvage work was begun in April 1990 and the ship was moved to Utila's East Harbour. While it was at anchor, a storm moved in and *El Aguila* was partially sunk in shallow water at the western end of East Harbour. Here, the boat remained for several more years.

Meanwhile, back in Roatan, the Galindo family, the owners of Anthony's Key Resort, had been

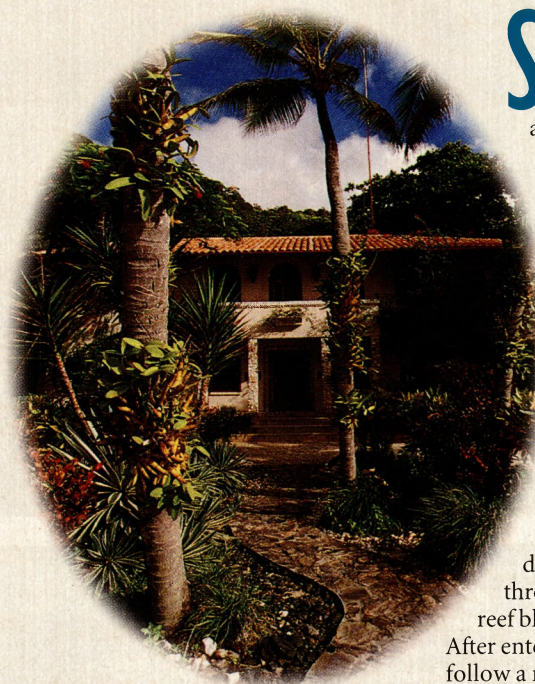
looking for a sizable and interesting ship to sink along Roatan's north shore as a diving attraction. Spurred on by a visiting film crew that wanted to film dolphins and a shipwreck (Anthony's Key is the home of the Institute for Marine Sciences, which includes a dolphin program), they heard about *El Aguila* and went aboard to look her over. At first the job seemed too big but negotiations progressed and an agreement was made to purchase the vessel. After a complete cleanup was performed, *El Aguila* was towed to a preselected site in front of Bailey's Key on Roatan's north coast, only three minutes from the Anthony's Key dock. Using sand anchors loaned by Peter Hughes' Bay Islands based *Wind Dancer*, *El Aguila* was moved into perfect position. Finally, during the first week of July 1997 holes were cut in both sides of the ship's hull just above the waterline and *El Aguila* quickly slipped beneath the surface of the sea. Three times a shipwreck, she now rests perfectly upright, on a sand shelf, tucked next to a coral reef in 100 feet of water.

The enormous task of finding, preparing and sinking the ship was totally an AKR effort, all accomplished without outside professional expertise, explosives or a single mishap; not even one piece of broken coral! In addition, Anthony's Key is sharing *El Aguila* with the entire Bay Islands dive community.

Above: A diver peers into the shipwreck's interior. This photo: Samir Galindo explores an electric winch on the forward deck of *El Aguila*.



AKR has an exclusive window of opportunity (8:30 to 9:30 am) to dive the new wreck with its guests; other resorts and dive operations may dive it at other times. A schedule has been completed for interested resorts with a minimal fee paid for each diver—a fee that goes into a special fund for maintaining the Sandy Bay Marine Park that borders a sizable portion of Roatan's north shore. Anthony's Key Resort is to be congratulated for the arrival, preparation and unselfish sharing of this superb new shipwreck! 🐠



Pampered in Paradise

POSADA DEL SOL

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY RICK FREHSEE

Swimming over and around a coral reef is delightful; swimming inside a coral reef is a unique adventure. This is exactly what can be experienced on a dive site off the beautiful island of Guanaja—the second largest of the three major Bay Islands of Honduras and the island farthest from shore.

Recently christened **Tito's Labyrinth** (after the recent and untimely passing of one of Guanaja's finest divemasters), this remarkable site, generically known as Black Rock, produces a thrill for even the most experienced diver. Along the island's north barrier reef coast is a series of undersea canyons, caverns and swim-throughs positioned inside a massive reef block of unbelievable proportions. After entering the mouth of a canyon, you follow a meandering trail inside the reef, surrounded on all sides by coral; nearly covered by coral ledges up above. Beams of sunlight show the way as you forge ahead; one tunnel leading to the next. Finally, you reach a dead end, a turnaround point that continues the dive in a different direction. Deep within the labyrinth, where walls are not exposed to direct sunlight, is the unmistakable presence of pillow lava—visual evidence of the volcanic birth of these majestic Bay Islands.

Diving in Guanaja offers many unique experiences. Unlike some islands that of-

fer similar diving from site to site, Guanaja presents a diverse portfolio. After Tito's Labyrinth, you might visit **Jim's Silverlode** on the southern side of the island, where there is an entirely different kind of reef formation. At the outer edge of a fringing reef is a sandy hollow surrounded by coral ridges and pinnacles. This natural cathedral, buzzing with groupers and reef fish, connects to the outer wall by a tunnel usually filled with Silversides. Next, you might visit the *Jado Trader*, a 200 foot plus intact shipwreck lying on her starboard side in 100 feet of water. Sunk a little more than 10 years ago, her massive hull, railings, companionways and cargo holds are covered with a stunning array of sponges, corals and Deep Water Seafans.

After that, head out to **Devil's Canyon**, a reef ridge off Guanaja's east end that normally harbors schools of Goggle-eyed Jacks and, once each year (around the first of January) hosts a massive grouper spawning.

If these regular Guanaja dive sites do not satisfy your needs for discovery and adventure, you will have to wait for the day you can cruise to the wilderness island of **Barbareta**, 12 miles away. Here you will find shallow garden reefs and precipitous walls decorated by huge barrel sponges, as well as miles of pristine underwater vistas rarely seen by divers.

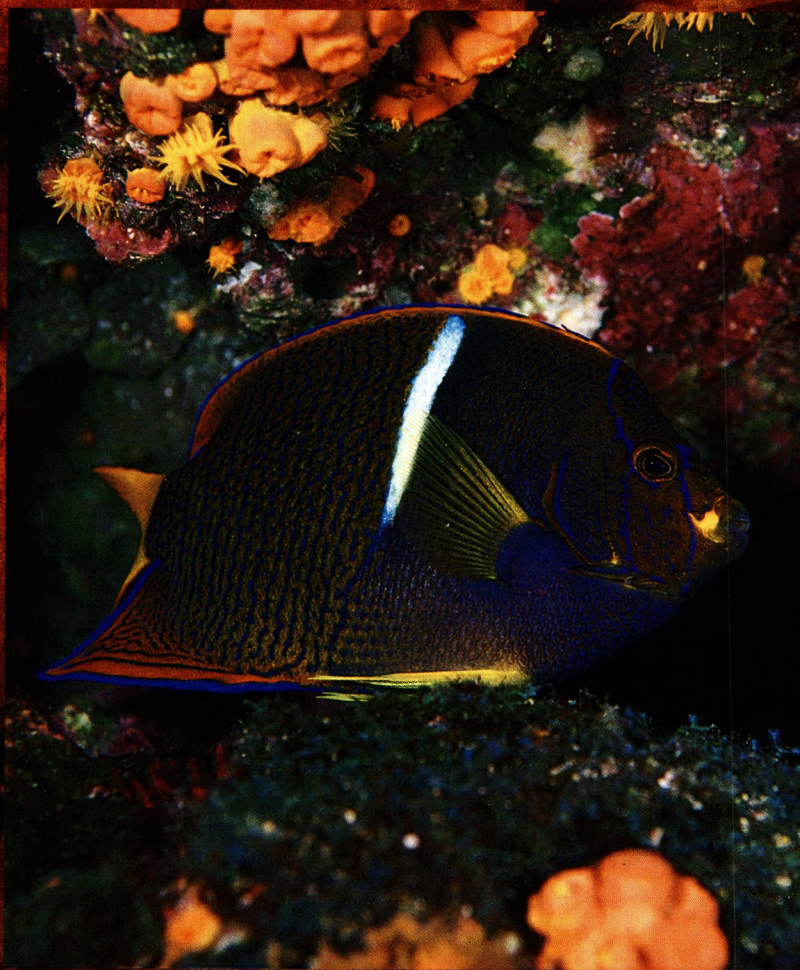
Guanaja above water is equally spectacular. The coast alternates between huge outcrops of volcanic rock and white
(Continued on Page 103)



Top: Posada Del Sol's mainhouse—the focal point of the resort. Right: The wreck of the *Jado Trader*. Above: The pool on the upper deck of the mainhouse.



Dive Guide



COSTA

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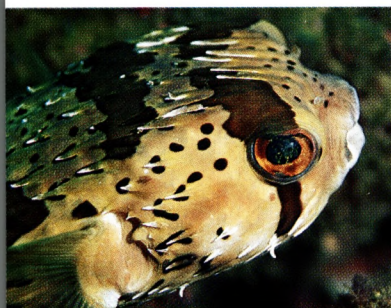


RICA

INGREDIENTS



You'll Find Over-crowded Schools, Bulky Bull Sharks and Extra-huge Mantas just Offshore



More than 50 years ago, Jacques Cousteau opened a door for the world to experience the extraordinary beauty of the marine environment. It was only a matter of time before technology, training and the adventurous human spirit led some of us to continue the exploration he began. This has taken place in the form of marine research, science and, of course, recreation. What a marvelous gift! But, as the unfamiliar becomes familiar, we tend to seek new places to quench our undying thirst for adventure. Costa Rica can fulfill those needs and awaits your discovery!

ence and, of course, recreation. What a marvelous gift! But, as the unfamiliar becomes familiar, we tend to seek new places to quench our undying thirst for adventure. Costa Rica can fulfill those needs and awaits your discovery!



THE COUNTRY

Costa Rica can be divided into three distinct geographical areas bound by two major bodies of water. Each of these areas has its own unique weather, cultural, topographical and economic distinctions. The country is bound on the east by the Caribbean Sea and on the west by the Pacific Ocean. A series of volcanic mountains runs north and south, virtually dividing the country in two. The northern section is a diverse agricultural area surrounded by volcanic mountains, several of which are still active today. In the central section of the country is an high altitude plain of fertile volcanic soil. The capital of San Jose is here, along with the majority of the country's industry and population. The southern section is untamed—very wild and primitive. *National Geographic* has described it as the "the most biologically intense place on earth" and it requires the most time and effort to reach.

Costa Rica's Caribbean coast is approximately 132 miles long and comprised of mangroves, swamps and sandy beaches. The 635 mile Pacific Coast is much more rugged. This coastline, laced with high rocky cliffs, is dotted with many gulfs, bays and peninsulas.

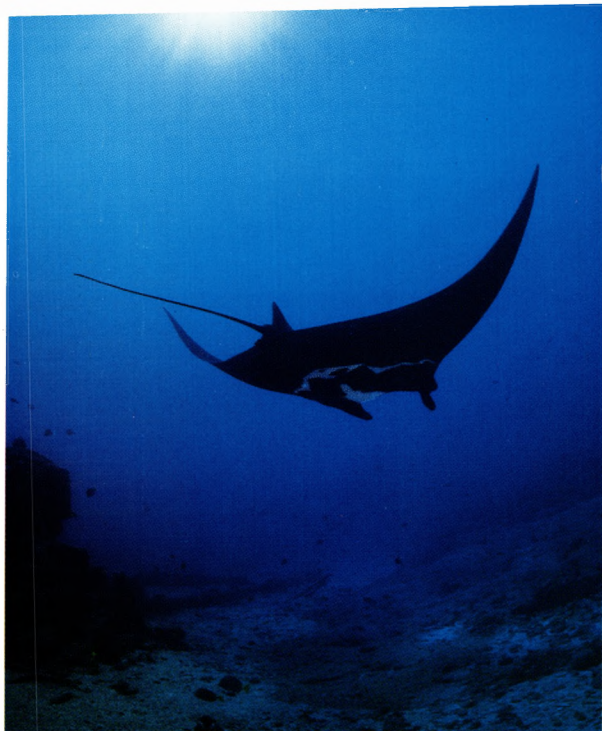
There are more than 20 national parks throughout Costa Rica and more than 25 percent of the entire country is a preserve. The country also boasts many additional private nature attractions, thus giving the eco-traveler a plethora of options and opportunities for adventure.

UNDERWATER

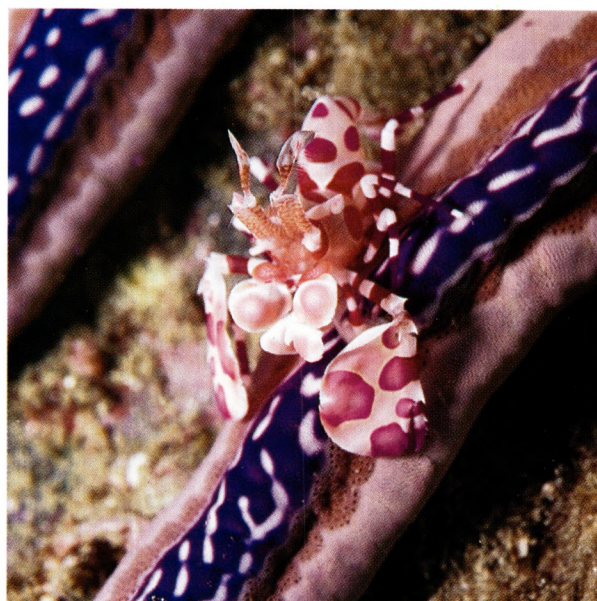
Guanacaste, the largest province in the country, is in the north Pacific region and



The marine life off Costa Rica is varied, unique and abundant. Top: The nocturnal Whitetip Reef Shark rests in a crevice during the day. Above: The resplendent Jeweled Moray (*Muraena lentiginosa*). Left: Portrait of a frogfish. Inset above left: Balloonfish (*Diodon holocanthus*).



Left: A Manta Ray (*Manta hamiltoni*) glides through the clear blue Pacific. Below: A colorful Harlequin Shrimp (*Hymenocera picta*).

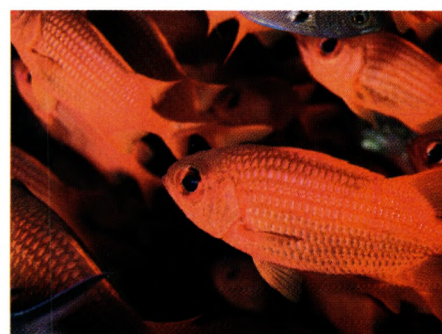


stretches across to the Caribbean. It is the center of mainland diving in Costa Rica, with many operators around the spectacular shores of the Gulf of Papagayo from Naranjo Beach to Flamingo Beach. There are more than 60 sites identified and frequented by local dive operators. Most are only a short boat ride from shore and the waters stay consistently calm, with only occasional current. Unlike other areas of Costa Rica, the diving is year-round because of the lack of rivers and thus the lack of run-off.

These nearby sites consist of volcanic rock formations and shallow, rocky pinnacles. Visibility ranges from 20 to 80 feet and averages 40 to 50 feet. At times, there may be an abundance of plankton, thus drawing Whale Sharks and Manta Rays, which frequent the area in the fall. Some of the popular sites are **Virador**, a rocky pinnacle that juts up to within 20 feet of the surface on the front side and 90 feet on the back. Here, you will see large schools of grunts, Sergeant Majors and many other varieties of schooling fish. The **Aquarium** has a sampling of everything in this region. Tiger Sharks, turtles and Jewfish are joined by schools of fish numbering in the thousands! Farther out, one to two hours from shore, are the **Catalina** and **Bat Islands**. This is more advanced diving, usually live-boat, with the possibility of



Right: A thick school of Panamic Soldierfish (*Myripristis leiognathos*). Below left: A Lettuce Nudibranch adds a frilly splash of color to the reef.



seeing even larger animals, including Hammerheads, Bull Sharks and Tigers along with rays and mantas. At **Big Scare** you may see Bull Sharks in the 9 to 15 foot range, weighing more than 2,000 pounds! The large schools of snapper, jacks, Rainbow Runners and Gaffed-topped Pompanos are breathtaking. As many as 50 Giant Mantas with wingspans up to 24 feet have been seen on a single dive! The shore based big animal diver will not be disappointed here.

The central diving region is on the Nicoya Peninsula and offers similar diving opportunities. From Tamarindo Beach to Samara Beach, the local dive operators will run to the nearby islands. All levels of diving can be accommodated because of the plentiful shallow areas in the 20 to 60 foot range along with deeper, open ocean facing drop-offs.

The Osa Peninsula, on the southern Pacific Coast, offers more seasonal diving. The mainland topography supports numerous rivers that may limit visibility during the rainy season. However, during the dry months the diving is spectacular. Drake Bay is the usual starting point for trips to **Cano Island**, a popular diving destination for local operators, requiring about an hour boat ride. You may stop at **Devil's Rock**, where you will find many larger pelagic fish,

A Naturalist's Dream, Costa Rica has a Multitude of Wildlife to Fascinate and Entertain.



including many species of sharks and schooling Mobula Rays.

Isla del Coco (Coco Island) is actually a national park. It consists of 5,900 acres of land and 45,900 acres of sea. It is the largest uninhabited island in the world. Three hundred thirty-two miles southeast of the southernmost point of the



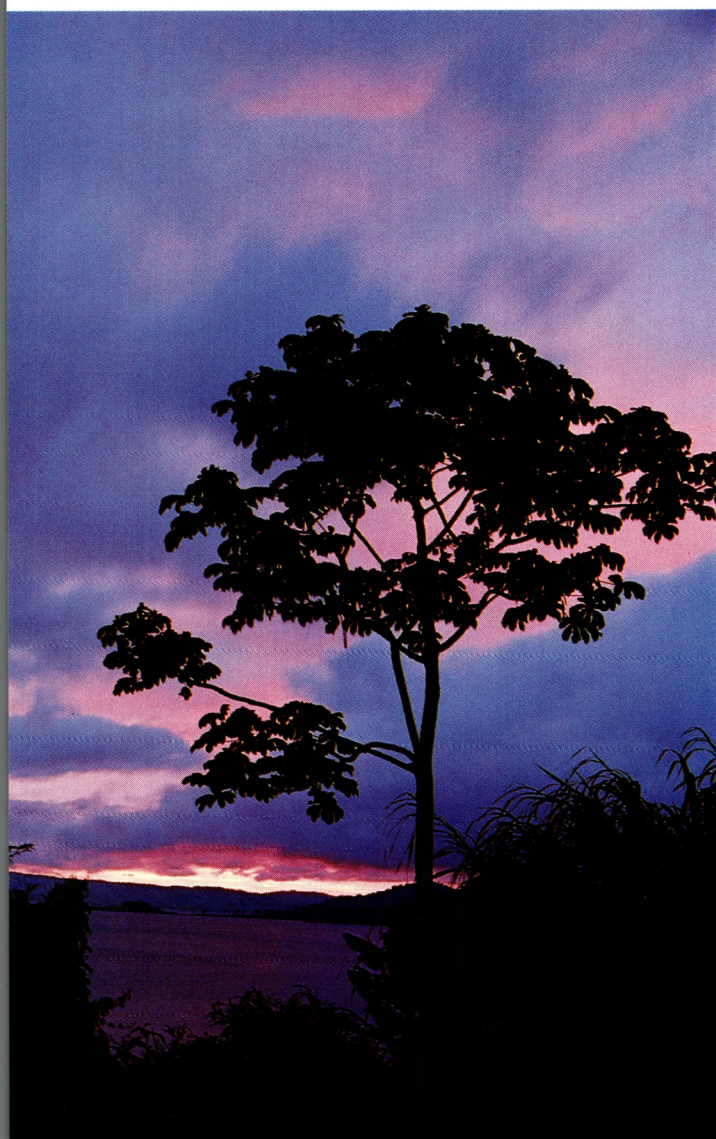
Nicoya Peninsula, this island is accessed by several dive live-boards. It has some of the best big animal diving in the world. Here schools of 200 to 600 Hammerheads may be seen silently swimming overhead. Many other big animal encounters include Whale Sharks, mantas, Humpback Whales, dolphins and Whitetip Sharks.

TOPSIDE

In Costa Rica the opportunity for the nature photographer to capture unique and fascinating subjects is unequalled, with nearly 1,000 species of trees and arboreal plants. There are more than 3,000 different species of flowers. The orchids form the largest family of flowering plants, with about 1,100 species described to date and many others awaiting discovery. Thirty salamanders and nearly 120 frogs and toads depend on seasonal rains to lay their eggs in ponds and streams, under logs and in the water accumulated in huge bromeliads. The country is home to roughly 200 species of mammals, half of which are bats, mostly of the fruit eating kind. Fascinating elements of this group include six species of felines, four species of monkeys and two species of sloths. Hummingbirds, tiny tropical jewels, number more than 50 species, ranging in size from bumble bee to nearly sparrow. Among the giants on any bird-watchers' list are the scarlet macaws and hawkeagles, which can be observed flying over the low-lying canopy. Over the swamps and wetlands the jaribu stork is frequently seen cruising at low altitudes in search of food.

Costa Rica is also very popular with the eco-adventurer. If your idea of adventure is exploring live volcanos, then Costa Rica's three volcanic national parks and several other reserves are for you. You could also explore the rain forest from about 200 feet in the air, suspended from a series of

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Costa Rica's rain forest clad hillsides (left) provide shelter for an incredible array of animals, such as the howler monkey (top).

Below: This brilliant red flower is one of 3,000 different species known to grow in Costa Rica. Right: The beautiful bay of Playa del Coco.



PLANNING

Prior to leaving on any adventure, you should do as much planning and research as possible. The Internet is a wonderful source of information and just about every dive operator and resort in Costa Rica has a Web site. One that I used for this trip was www.waytogocostarica.com but most search engines will provide you with many more. Most of the advertisers also have their own Web sites as well. While American Express is widely accepted, Visa is even better, especially in smaller towns and villages.

Anyone coming to Costa Rica will leave this country with a part of it in their heart. It is an adventure and a love story in the same place. Costa Rica is excitement!

ropes joining tree to tree. Other adventures such as hiking, camping, whitewater rafting, horseback riding and simply land touring are also available and very affordable.



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LACSA Fast Facts

HOW TO GET THERE

American, Continental, United and Taca are the major airlines flying regularly from the US to Costa Rica. There are over ten domestic and charter airlines providing excellent service to the major natural attractions within country.

GEOGRAPHY: Costa Rica is bordered by Nicaragua to the north and Panama to the Southeast. It is located 1,115 miles from Miami which takes approximately 2 1/2 hours flight time

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS: Citizens from the US,

TAXI: Good taxi service is available from the airports and in town. As with any country or city ask what the fare will be to your destination before you get in the taxi.

CURRENCY: 235 colonias = \$1.00 US

TIPPING: A 10% tip in a restaurant is appropriate but most will add it to your bill so read your bill before adding a tip. Taxi drivers generally do not receive a tip.

WATER AND ELECTRICITY: Water is drinkable throughout most of the country and electricity runs 110 volt/60 cycle AC.

POPULATION: Approximately 3.3 million residents.



Canada and Panama can enter with a tourist card and one other piece of identification, such as a passport, drivers license or birth certificate. No passport is required. Citizens from all other countries require a valid passport to enter. Visas are needed by certain nationalities so check ahead.

LANGUAGE: Spanish is the official language, however, English is widely spoken in the tourist areas throughout the country.

CAR RENTALS: Upon arriving in Costa Rica you can rent a car at any of the agencies at Juan Santamaria International Airport (San Jose) or in the city of San Jose. Current Drivers License is needed with credit card deposit. Most cars and four wheel drive vehicles are between \$50 and \$100 a day

TELEPHONE: Direct-dial service is efficient and there are more phones per capita than any other Latin American country. Many long distance services are available. If calling from the US to Costa Rica just dial 011-506 and the number and you will connect directly to your party.

TIME ZONE: Costa Rica is the same as US central standard time but does not observe daylight savings time.



COSTA RICA VISITOR INFORMATION

Costa Rica Tourist Board (I.C.T.)
Information Office in Plaza de la Cultura,
5th St. between Central & Second Ave.

Phones (506) 223-1733 Ext. 277 or (506) 222-1090

Main office in Costa Rica:
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Phone: (506) 223-1733 / Fax: (506) 223-5452

P.O. Box 777-1000 San Jose, Costa Rica

HOT LINE

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Information in U.S.A.: **1-800-343-6332**

Over 50% live in the central valley which comprises only 4% of the entire country.

GOVERNMENT: Costa Rica is a democratically elected republic and is set up like the US in that it has independent executive, legislative and judicial branches. Elections are held every four years.

HOLIDAYS: Costa Rica is a Catholic country and its holidays are mostly church related. The Easter celebration (Holy Week) is considered to be the

biggest holiday

CLIMATE: Costa Rica is a tropical country and experiences only two seasons: wet and dry. The dry season is generally between late December and April and the wet season lasts the rest of the year. The Caribbean coast tends to be wet all year. Temperatures range from 74°F to 85°F throughout the year with cooler evenings temperatures in the mountainous areas.

DEPARTURE TAX: The average rate is US \$16.00 to depart by air. Land and sea departures are not taxed.

HOSPITALS: Healthcare in Costa Rica is very good and sanitary standards are high. First-class hospitals are found throughout San Jose and some of the other largely populated areas.

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Text and Photography
by Dan Auber
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POSADA DEL SOL

(Continued from Page 94)

beaches crowded with palms, behind which lush hillsides reach toward pine-capped mountains. The island appears almost totally unspoiled and undeveloped; only a few stilt-house villages are found along the shoreline. The local inhabitants, called Baymen, continue to shun roads and land vehicles—transportation is by boat or water taxi.

Incredibly, one of the world's most beautiful and casually elegant little dive resorts is found here—Posada Del Sol (Inn of the Sun), on Guanaja's southern coast. Formerly the private mansion of an eccentric millionaire, Posada Del Sol has become one of the most stunningly beautiful little dedicated dive resorts in the entire Caribbean. And small it is; there are only 23 total guestrooms arranged into four attractive wings—one on the pool deck of the upper level of the mainhouse, one facing the ocean off the lower level and two staggered on a verdant hillside. Each room is beautifully furnished and appointed in varnished woods, tropical decor, tile and marble.

The resort exterior peeks out of a palm lined walkway and a manicured landscape of fruit and flower trees. Nestled in the center and entered via a circular garden and stone walkway is the breathtaking mainhouse. Beige stucco walls and high Spanish arches capped with red tile roofs are framed in greenery and accented with flowers.

On the upper level is a sprawling wooden deck surrounding a beautiful freshwater pool. A bar and restaurant are found within. The walkway that lines 1,500 feet

of coastline (including a private beach), leads you past gardens, tennis courts and a barbecue area to the boat-house, dive shop, photo shop, guest wet storage areas

and fully equipped workout center.

Breakfast and dinner are served in the dining room; lunch is usually offered beneath the shade of umbrellas and tropical foliage. Besides the diving, the highlight of your day will be mealtime—fresh fruit, seafood and continental specialties prepared to perfection by a professional chef. Snacks, happy hour drinks and complimentary early morning room service coffee are daily offerings.

The Posada Del Sol in-house dive operation features four mid-sized custom dive boats and several other fishing/diving/taxi

crafts. The dive boats are of similar design; each is 42 to 44 feet in length with sunroof, spacious deck, storage areas, platform and ladder systems. The PDS boats have access to more than 40 moored dive sites and regularly run to both sides of the island. There are normally 8 to 12 guests aboard each vessel. The usual daily schedule includes two single tank boat dives in the morning and a single tank boat dive in the afternoon. One boat night dive is offered and an all day picnic dive is scheduled each week. Also each week is the all day Barbareta dive trip, weather permitting. An interesting series of shore dives that includes a couple of boat wrecks and an air-

plane wreck begins from the dive dock.

Calories gained from excellent food, sumptuous desserts and wine with dinner can be lost on the aerobic trail that scales the hillsides above the resort and on a hike to the scenic waterfall at Big Gully. Visitors can also schedule a trip to the mainland to visit the ancient Maya city of Copan or go on a whitewater river journey.

New management at the resort and dive center leads a polite, friendly and attentive staff to an exceptional standard of service. For more information or reservations, call (800) 642-3483; (561) 624-3483, e-mail posadadel@aol.com or visit the Web site at www.posadadel.com.

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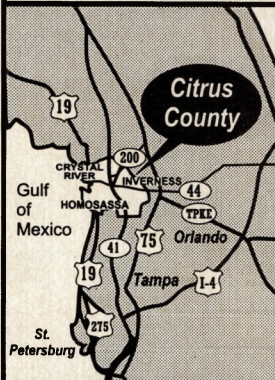
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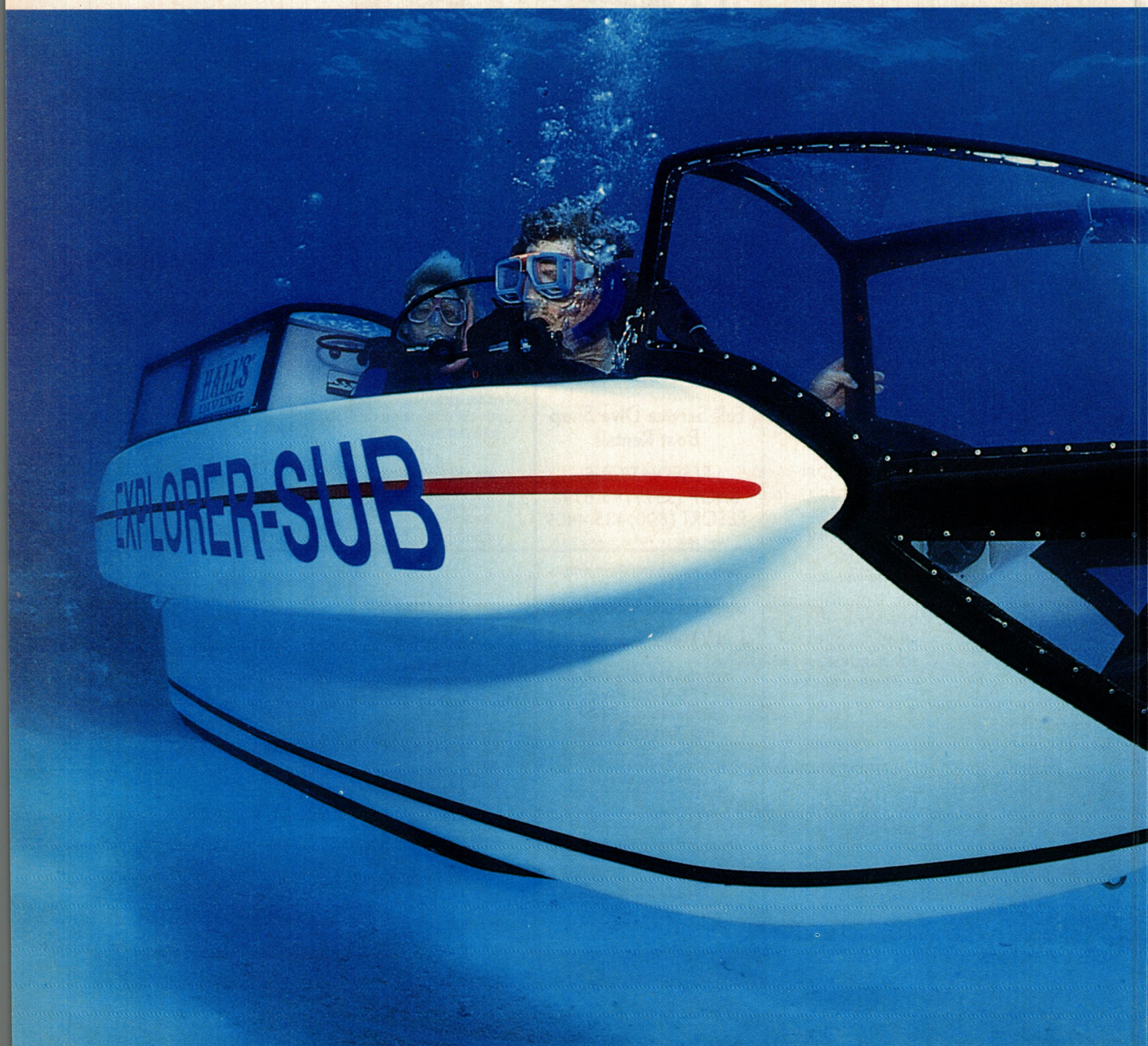
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Scuba Instructors Go to Sub School

EXPANDING THE BOUNDARIES OF
TECHNOLOGY AND TRAINING AT
HALL'S IN MARATHON, FLORIDA

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY BILL HARRIGAN

Learning your job on the cutting edge can be challenging and fun, the problem is knowing where to find it. Technology is changing the world so fast it's hard for anyone to keep up. If you are considering a career in diving and want to be sure your training incorporates the latest developments, try a training center such as Bob Brayman's International Career Institute at Hall's in Marathon, Florida. For two decades, Bob has continuously adjusted the curriculum to stay on the leading edge of sport diving. In fact, Hall's has helped define that edge by innovatively introducing new combinations of training to expand the perimeter of experience of its instructors. The latest additions at



Hall's, the Submersible Systems Technology (SST) Submarine and the Dive Comm underwater communications system, are good examples of Bob's intent to provide the latest and most exciting training possible.

HALL'S SUBMARINE: The SST sub looks as if it belongs on the set of a *James Bond* movie. Sleekly constructed of aluminum and fiberglass, the sub is 16 feet long and less than four feet wide. It's a wet sub, so you ride inside wearing regular dive gear. A pilot and two passengers sit one behind the other beneath a sliding Plexiglas canopy.

The essence of the sub is speed, of course. Traveling at three and a half knots gives you a whole new perspective of the underwater world. Spatial relationships change dramatically at this speed and distances seem to shrink.

Sitting in a relaxed, upright position changes your outlook as well, making it easier to swivel your head from side to side for a more panoramic view. The sub can get you upclose, too, because the airplane-like controls make it very maneuverable in the hands of a skillful pilot. There may not be a submersible like this in everyone's future, but right now it's a unique and horizon-expanding experience available only to Hall's graduates.

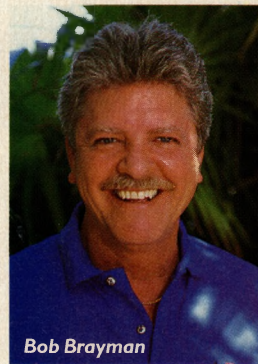
UNDERWATER COMMUNICATIONS: The silent world is wonderful, unless you have something to tell your dive buddy, then it's just frustrating. Most sport divers, though, have to make do with cryptic notes on slates or the underwater version of charades. Usually this results in a surface scene after the dive where your partner asks what you meant by that weird hand signal and you explain with your last ounce of patience that you were trying to point out the elusive Purple-spotted Stickleback Eel. Underwater communications systems can change all that, but the systems with good range and clarity utilize expensive technology that limits their application to industry, rescue and science. Hall's DiveComm dual frequency single sideband unit gives students the opportunity to learn how to operate a sophisticated system and become familiar with its capabilities. Considering the number of instructors who have gone on from Hall's to positions with metropolitan police departments, university diving programs and even NASA, this sort of training can be a useful advantage in the job market.

INTERNATIONAL DIVING CAREER INSTITUTE: The training programs at Hall's have been developed with one basic thought in mind: to allow someone in good health but without previous training or experience to become a confident instructor with all the skills needed for a responsible and good paying job at a dive resort or on a live-aboard. The extraordinary job placement record at Hall's reflects the success of this approach and the reputation Hall's graduates have in the sport diving industry.

TEN, ONE AND ONE: The heart of Hall's training is the 10 week Professional Store and Resort Instructor Training Program. Even students starting from scratch can enroll in this program and still finish in 10 weeks. Most students, however, also stay on for two additional programs, the one week Professional Rebreather Instructor Training Program and the one week Professional Deep Tech Instructor Training Program. In the course of these 12 weeks, Hall's students acquire 29 certifications from 10 different agencies, including organizations such as PADI, NAUI, American Canadian Underwater Certification

(ACUC), NASDS, Technical Diving International (TDI) and the International Association of Nitrox and Technical Divers (IANTD).

PROFESSIONAL STORE AND RESORT INSTRUCTOR: In order to provide the most useful and well-rounded instructor training program possible, Bob decided Hall's would pick and choose among the courses offered by these agencies in order to assemble the best possible combination. PADI, NAUI and the ACUC course work take the student through Rescue Diver, Boatmaster and Divemaster, while NAUI, NASDS and CMAS provide the basis for the instructor training. Master Scuba Diver Trainer, Instructor and the Instructor Specialty courses are based upon ACUC standards. Nitrox instructor certifications are obtained from both TDI and IANTD. Equipment repair technician qualifica-

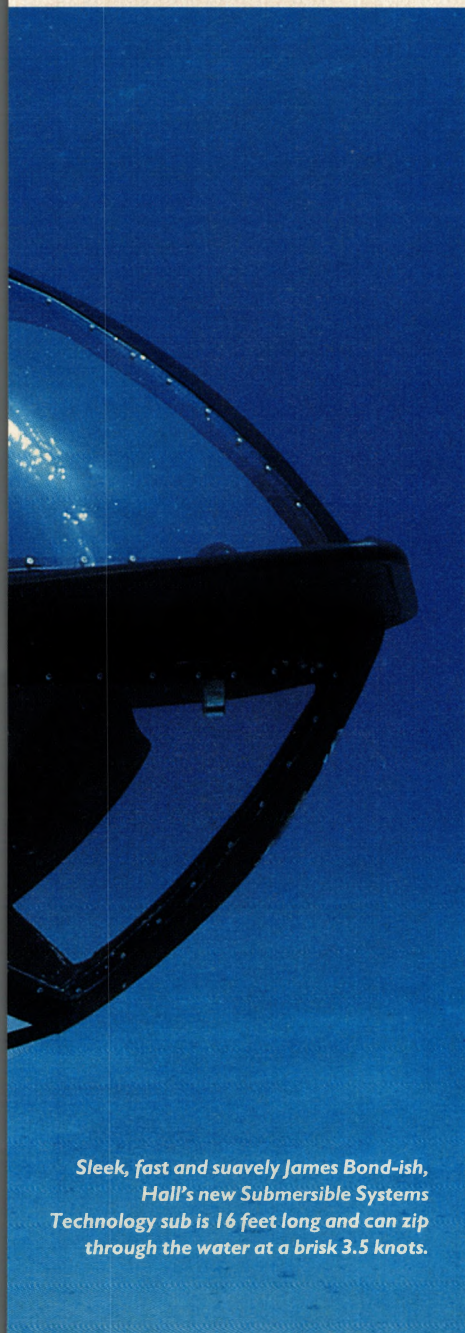


Bob Brayman

"There may not be a submersible like this in everyone's future, but right now it's a unique and horizon expanding experience available only to Hall's graduates."

tions likewise fall under several different agencies, providing coverage of many different brands, including Sherwood, U.S. Divers, Dacor, Scubapro and others. Among the other major topics covered in the program are diving accident response, resort and business operation, and sales. After completion of the instructor training during the program, on the job experience is gained through apprenticeship at the dive center.

DEEP TECH INSTRUCTOR: The one week Professional Deep Tech Instructor Training Program is intended to build on the experiences of the ten week program, ex-



Sleek, fast and suavely James Bond-ish, Hall's new Submersible Systems Technology sub is 16 feet long and can zip through the water at a brisk 3.5 knots.

SCUBA INSTRUCTORS GO TO SUB SCHOOL

posing students to the more technical side of sport diving. Subjects include rebreathers, gas blending, mixed gas theory, advanced wreck diving, stage decompres-

sion and extended range diving. This course is where students get their hands on the more technical equipment such as Dräger Atlantis I rebreathers, diver propulsion vehicles, the DiveComm system and the submersible.

REBREATHING INSTRUCTOR: Learning to use a rebreather is exciting, but being qualified to instruct others is where the money is made. In this one week course, students delve much deeper into rebreather theory and mechanics to prepare themselves as teachers. Academic planning and performance are practiced during classroom, pool and openwater sessions, where the future instructors learn to pass their skills on to their students. Emphasis is placed on being able to correctly evaluate the progress of students, recognizing and solving problems they may be having.

FLORIDA KEYS FACILITIES: Living and diving in the Florida Keys is one of the enjoyable benefits of choosing Hall's for your training. Diving is good year-round in the clear, warm water of the Keys and reefs such as **Sombrero** and **Delta Shoal** are only a short boat trip away. Hall's is also close to wrecks such as the **Thunderbolt**, a 188 foot long cable layer that rests upright in about 90 feet of water.

The institute is on the grounds of the

Faro Blanco Marine Resort in Marathon, sharing a 2,200 square foot facility with Hall's dive center. Classrooms, pool, boat and accommodations are all at the resort.

Lady Key Diver, the institute's dive boat, is a custom 40 foot vessel with all the expected amenities. A variety of restaurants and stores are within easy walking distance of the facility.

THE MONEY QUESTIONS: Most people considering a career in sport diving have two questions concerning money: how much will it cost to become an instructor and how much will I make afterward? I asked Bob those questions and you may find his answers interesting. First he pointed out that instruction at Hall's is competitively priced and low cost loans can be easily secured to cover tuition and lodging. Several lodging options are available to provide a range of accommodations from economy to deluxe to further control costs. Bob also referred to records showing many Hall's graduates have been placed in jobs paying above average for the industry. He ascribes this to the thoroughness of the Hall's training and the current high demand for instructors.

For more information, call the International Diving Career Institute at Hall's at (800) 331-4255. In Florida or outside the U.S., call (305) 743-5929. Requests can also be faxed to (305) 743-8168 or sent to Bob Brayman's International Diving Career Institute at Hall's, 1994 Overseas Highway, Marathon, Florida 33050. 📠



Left: As part of Hall's leading edge training, students are taught the fine points of using Dräger Atlantis I semi-closed circuit rebreathers. Below: Launching the SST three man submarine.



Dive Notes

PADI'S NEW PROJECT AWARE CERTIFICATION CARD: Divers certified through PADI can now choose a new, limited edition Project AWARE (Aquatic World Awareness, Responsibility and Education) version of their certification card that shows support for the preservation of the fragile marine environment. The new, full color card includes a photograph of clownfish nestled in the tentacles of anemone and a full color Project AWARE logo.



The card is available with new certifications or as a replacement card by adding a minimum donation of \$5 to the Project AWARE Foundation. All contributions to the Foundation are tax deductible, when applicable, and go toward beneficial programs such as environmental research, ecological cleanups and public environmental education programs.

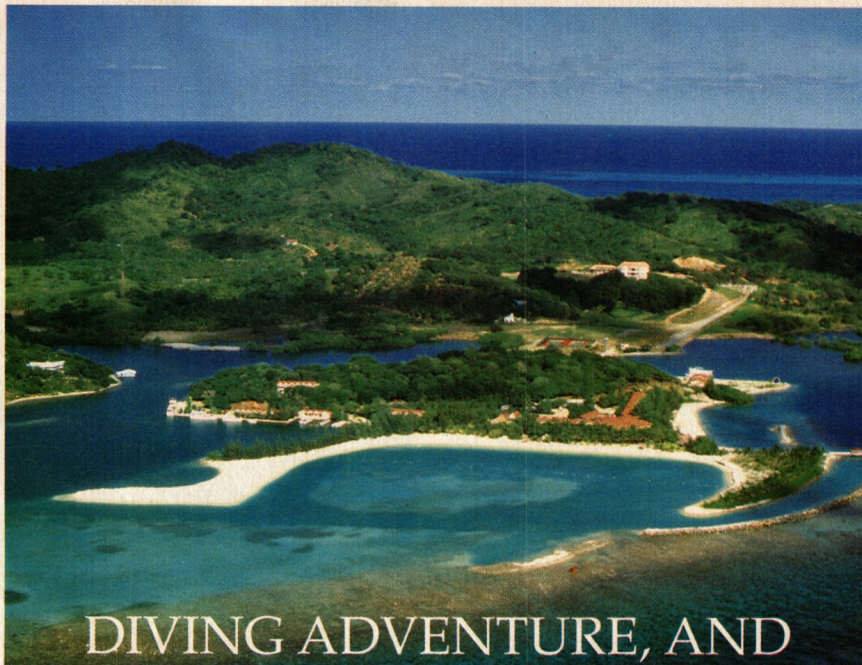
To show your support for the preservation of the marine environment, or for more information, contact your local PADI Dive Center, resort or instructor. For the nearest location, contact PADI at (800) 729-7234 or (714) 540-7234 or visit the PADI Web site at www.padi.com.

STUART COVE STAFF MEMBER RECEIVES EMMY FOR VIDEOGRAPHY: Pam Christman, manager of Stuart Cove's Fin-Photo operation, recently received a local Emmy Award for her role in the production of an episode of *Georgia Outdoors*, a weekly program broadcast throughout the Southeast.

Christman, who frequently shoots underwater footage for movie and television productions at Dive South Ocean, captured the show's host, Kimberly Munn, and Stuart Cove while the pair fed Silky Sharks and moray eels off the Nassau coast.

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Return of the Iron Ship

THE WRECK OF THE WORLD'S FIRST SUB IS FOUND

BY ED YOUNG

The wreck of the first engine-powered submarine, lost for more than 100 years, was found last year by a British Rail locomotive engineer.

It marks the end of a search by Bill Garrett, the inventor's great-grandson, who had spent a fortune bankrolling diving trips in Britain to find the missing ship. Bill, 48, who runs a Harley-Davidson franchise in New Jersey, said, "I

couldn't be more delighted. The sub had become almost an obsession. The next job is to decide what's to be done about preserving the hull. And when she's lifted, I shall be there with a magnum of champagne to celebrate!"

According to Jeff Tall, OBE, RN, who runs the Royal Navy Submarine Museum in Gosport, Hampshire, the 45 foot, three man sub *Resurgam II*, is a sen-

sational find. "Just like winning the lottery," he said. "It was the world's first mechanically powered submarine and although basic by today's standards, it set men thinking about the submarine's potential in wartime."

It was amateur diver Keith Hurley from Chester who found the sub 50 feet deep off the Welsh coast when he went to free some fishing nets that had snagged. Keith



The *Resurgam II* in 1879, just after its completion in Birkenhead. The sub's designer, the Reverend George Garrett, is in the center holding his year old daughter, Georgina. Captain Jackson is on the right, George Price, the engineer, on the left.

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enjoys wreck hunting to relax from his job driving passenger trains.

Mostly he finds the ribs of ancient galleons. But this time, instead of finding Spanish coins and pottery, he saw the iron sub sitting upright on the seabed.

"It was an incredible sight," said 41 year old Keith, "I knew the sub was down there somewhere; I had even been out searching with Bill Garrett. But I never expected to find it in such good condition. After I freed the nets I found a porthole from the wreck lying in the mud. I brought it up and later sent it to Bill as a souvenir."



Keith Hurley
found the sub.

Luck had indeed smiled on Keith Hurley. Not only for being in the right place at the right time but because there was enough visibility to see. "Fortunately it hadn't been raining for weeks," said Keith, "so the rivers that normally pour into the sea hadn't stirred up the silt."

Keith telephoned his wife, Joanne, from the fishing trawler. She then phoned Bill Garrett's wife in Plainsville, New Jersey. Next to know was Commander Tall at the Submarine Museum who, on checking what was known about the famous ship, discovered that after the *Resurgam* sunk in 1880, it had been "sold" to the museum for exactly £1!

But if the torpedo shaped sub, with its coal fired, single cylinder engine, was remarkable—its propeller had to be hand-cranked when the engine ran out of steam—so was its colorful inventor. For not only did the Reverend George William Garrett have a stack of university honors behind him, he was also a skilled engineer and bare-knuckle fighter—the first lightweight boxer ever to defeat a heavyweight in a championship fight!

But the young engineer was bored. It was the age of invention and he wanted a part of it. So, after a tour as instructor at the Mechanics Institute in Manchester and later at the South Kensington Museum, he went on a gruelling voyage around the world and came back full of patriotic zeal.

He was worried by persistent reports that the Czar of Russia was expanding his fleet of ironclads. Garrett thought about it and decided a fleet of submarines was the

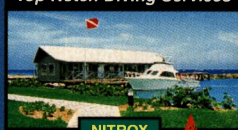
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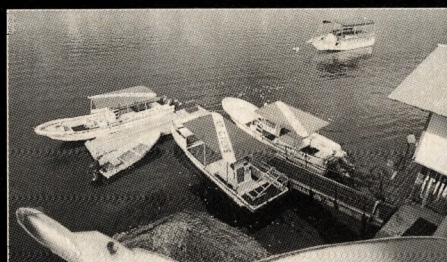
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**RETURN OF THE
IRON SHIP**

best defense for Great Britain against marauding fleets. From that moment his life was dedicated to the design and construction of an efficient underwater vessel. His first attempt was *Resurgam I*, a small, egg-shaped craft that had to be laboriously cranked by hand while below the surface.

It was primitive and inefficient but it was a start. Then, in the best traditions of many great inventors, Garrett sketched his ideas for *Resurgam II* on the back of an envelope bearing a Victorian halfpenny stamp.



Bill Garrett (second from right) and his dive crew during one of their many searches for the *Resurgam II*, lost in Liverpool Bay in 1880, about ten miles offshore.

The same envelope, showing a design for a propulsion unit for his 30 ton spindle-shaped boat—the first mechanically powered submarine in the world—can be seen today in the Royal Navy Submarine Museum.

Provided the crew could survive the intense heat and fumes (problems that in time could be overcome, Garrett assured his friends), the new craft could be the answer to Britain's defense in time of war.

To raise money for the venture, Garrett created the Garrett Submarine Navigation and Pneumatophore Company, Ltd., registered at 56 Deansgate in Manchester, with a capital of £10,000 in £1 shares. As for any critics who doubted his motives, the inventor assured them: "As to the invention being for murdering people... this is all nonsense."

"Every contribution made by science to improve instruments of war makes war shorter and, in the end, less terrible to human life and to human progress."

In the afternoon of November 26, 1879, a giant steam crane lifted the vessel from the quay in Birkenhead and lowered it into the dock to undergo trials. On board with Garrett was the skipper, master mariner Jackson, and George Price, engineer. With the firebox glowing and a

(Continued on Page 152)

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A Diver's New Year's Resolutions

BY JEANNE BEAR SLEEPER

Make one of your 1998 New Year's resolutions a commitment to personal growth and enjoyment through scuba diving. Since you have already quit smoking, lost weight, fixed everything around the house and are performing 110 percent at work, this is the year to focus on recreational diving excellence!

A thoroughly non-scientific survey was conducted among California divers, with these resolutions most often cited as "ought to be on my list."

TRY A NEW DIVE SITE: Most divers are in a rut going to the same spots over and over. Try a new lake. Even if the diving stinks, you can tell stories about how bad it was! Check out the location guidebooks for new ideas. Consider a weekend trip to another state or a boat trip. Use your frequent flyer miles to fly to San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Seattle, Ft. Lauderdale, Miami, West Palm Beach or any of the dozens of other cities with fleets of day dive boats.

LEARN A NEW SKILL: If you are diving less because you are bored, take up underwater photography. Then you'll have lots to think about! Or, take an U/W navigation class and hone your compass skills. If you are really ready to stretch, think about enrolling in cave, ice or wreck diving courses. If you can't fit a class into your schedule, get a book and teach yourself a useful skill, such as knot tying.

ENCOURAGE A NEW DIVER: Ask a novice to go diving with you. Advanced divers have been known to treat novices like second class citizens. Invite them to join your club, your diving weekend or to be your buddy. You might actually enjoy teaching a new diver a thing or two and helping someone become comfortable in the water.

SHARE THE JOY OF DIVING WITH NON-DIVERS: The underwater world is amazing. Breathing underwater is a trip. Being weightless and free is a wild experience. The ecology of the world's waters is incredibly important to the health of mankind. Tell someone how it feels and why you go scuba diving. Ask your child's

teacher if you could bring equipment and talk to the class. Offer to speak to the teen group at your place of worship. Volunteer as a docent at a local aquarium or for the parks and recreation department seaside nature walk programs.

GIVE BACK SOME OF THE PLEASURE: Volunteer at organized activities such as beach clean-ups. Or, make a long term commitment by training as a hyperbaric chamber operator and then volunteering to stand watch a few weekends a year. Practice random acts of thoughtfulness by making sure the beach you use is cleaner

beach walk, photograph the wildlife, examine the tide pools and share your love of the underwater environment with your family topside.

ATTEND A DIVING RELATED FUNCTION: Check out the calendar listings in diving publications and pick a film show, conference or workshop to attend. Activities are offered around the country, mostly in spring, fall and winter. The prices range from free to modest and you usually do not have to be affiliated with the group putting on the program. One of the hottest IMAX movies in Southern California last year was *Undersea*, which introduced thousands weekly to the beauty of the underwater world.

READ A DIVING PUBLICATION: Subscribe to more than one publication about the underwater world. Continue to read *Skin Diver Magazine*, plus add another book or magazine. Consider joining DAN and reading its magazine *Alert Diver*; explore nature's beauty with *Ocean Realm* and its fabulous pictorials.

MAKE A WISH LIST OF DIVING THINGS YOU WANT TO DO: Have dreams and goals that you carry from year to year, checking off experiences as you log memories.

There are no rules or boundaries on this private slate. More than 5,000 dives ago, when I started blowing bubbles, I made a list of 99 things to do before I was 50. (I guess at 18 I assumed 50 was the end!) From the list, here's what I have left to do in the next few years: see every species of whale in or under the water (22 are marked off so far); have one of my photographs appear on the cover of *National Geographic*; find a new species; dive the Antarctic; go diving with Stan Waterman; marry someone who loves the ocean as much as I do; hold a Giant Octopus; pet a really big shark; live aboard a boat and dive the Great Barrier Reef for 30 days in a row.

Checking off the first 90 items have been 90 of the happiest moments in my life. Make a resolution, no matter what your age, to make a list of 99 things to do, and then begin. 🐬

New Year's Resolutions

- Try a new dive site
- Learn a new skill
- Encourage a new diver
- Share the joy of diving with nondivers
- Give back some of the pleasure
- Adapt your equipment
- Clean, service and repair equipment off-season
- Make diving a family affair
- Attend a diving related function
- Read a diving publication
- Make a wish list of diving things you want to do

when you leave than when you came.

UPDATE YOUR EQUIPMENT: Maybe use your tax refund check to purchase your first dive computer or drysuit. Did you get cash for Christmas? Use it to replace your old buoyancy compensator or regulator. If replacing a mask or snorkel would add pleasure to your dives, just do it.

CLEAN, SERVICE AND REPAIR EQUIPMENT OFF-SEASON: If winter is a nondiving season for you, now is the time to replace straps, get regulators serviced, lube connections or glue wetsuit tears and nicks. Dump out your dive bag and throw away the odd bits that have accumulated, replenish your first aid kit—you might even consider washing that dive bag!

MAKE DIVING A FAMILY AFFAIR: Whether family members dive or not, they can be part of a diving activity. Make a diving day a family day by taking everyone to the beach and having a picnic. Take a family

Cayman Salvage Master

KEY WEST'S MODERN
HISTORICAL SHIPWRECK

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY GERI MURPHY



Of the 50 or so dive sites around Key West, the wreck of the *Cayman Salvage Master* is perhaps the most representative of this area's alluring undersea adventures. The name of the wreck is a bit confusing since it contains the name of a famous Caribbean island. And, to make matters even more complex, various books and internet sites refer to this shipwreck as the *Cayman Salvager* or *Cayman Salvor*.

Yet, despite the confusion, the wreck stands out as one of the signature dives of Key West. It is the kind of site all divers enjoy, whether they are novices or experienced wreck buffs. Even more intriguing, this particular wreck has a modern history that equals the stories about the old Spanish treasure ships rumored to be hidden in these waters.

The *Cayman Salvage Master* was originally a lighthouse buoy tender for the U.S. Coast Guard. Built in 1936, this steel hulled vessel measures 186 feet in length, with a 37 foot beam. Her most distinctive feature is the cable pulley built into her bow.

After being decommissioned by the Coast Guard, the ship was sailing as a commercial freighter under the Panamanian flag when she became involved in the Mariel Harbour boatlift of 1980. Immediately upon arrival in Key West—with 1,400 Cuban refugees—she was impounded by the U.S. Navy.

Neglected for years, she eventually sank in the Navy Harbor at Key West. In 1985, she was refloated and her superstructure was removed in preparation for sinking as an artificial reef. While she was being towed to sea, the cable snapped and the unlucky derelict sank. She settled to the bottom on her side and remained that way until a powerful undersea surge from Hurricane Kate flipped her upright.

Today, the *Cayman Salvage Master* is one of Key West's most popular wreck dives. Her proximity to Key West and her depth make her ideal for recreational open water dives. She sits almost upright on a sand bottom, with the stern in 92 feet of water. Her decks are at 70 feet and most of the vessel's interior compart-



Top: The Cayman Salvage Master far beyond her glory years, just prior to being sunk. This ex-U.S. Coast Guard lighthouse buoy tender now attracts a wide variety of marine life, such as Yellowtail Snappers and Blue Angelfish.

ments and engine room are at 80 feet. The water temperature rises to 86°F during the summer months. Average underwater visibility is exceptionally good on this wreck—about 50 feet—as it is near the Gulf Stream. The wreck is five miles due south of Key West and takes approximately 30 minutes to reach by boat.

One of the lures of the *Cayman Salvage Master* is that she has become home and

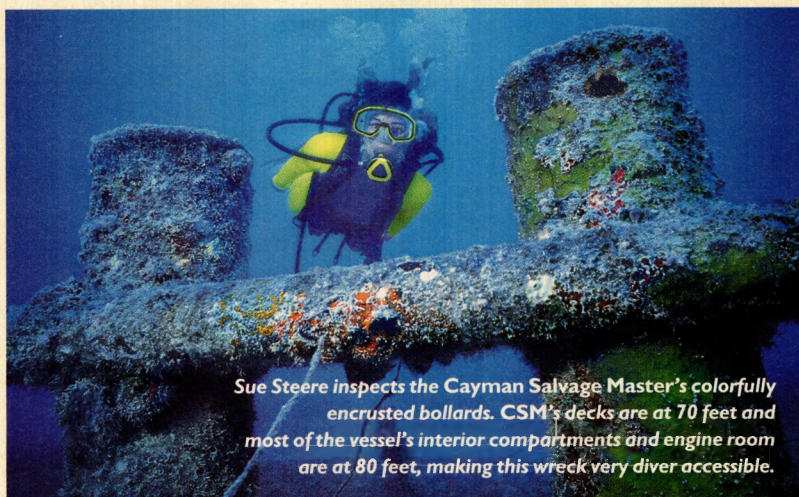


haven for several Jewfish. A small, 120 pound Jewfish is often seen in the engine room, while a much larger 800 pound behemoth sometimes appears loitering under the vessel's stern. The great fish are wary of divers; they are often seen but less often photographed.

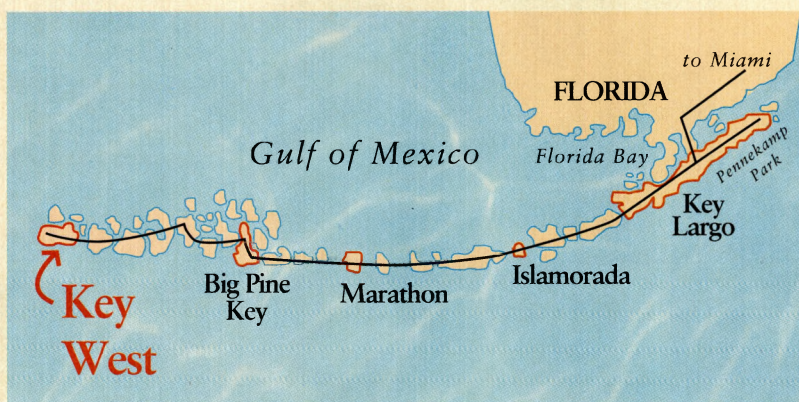
Other fish that hang out in the engine room area include Snook and, occasionally, a grouper. A large Green Moray can be found living in or under the cable pulley mounted on the vessel's bow. It makes a great photo because the wheel is encrusted with colorful sponges and corals. Hanging above the wreck is a single Barracuda, motionless but alert.

At the opposite end of the vessel, ex-

KEY WEST SCUBA DIVING SERVICES



Sue Steere inspects the Cayman Salvage Master's colorfully encrusted bollards. CSM's decks are at 70 feet and most of the vessel's interior compartments and engine room are at 80 feet, making this wreck very diver accessible.



For more information about diving in the Key West area, contact:

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ploring divers will find a giant rudder beneath the stern. Schools of jacks often cruise just off the stern, hunting for bait-fish. During our dive, two giant African Pompano cruised past the wreck just 20 feet off the port side.

“...the wreck stands out as one of the signature dives of Key West...whether [divers] are novices or experienced wreck buffs.”

Arriving divers will find several extremely friendly angelfish on the Cayman Salvage Master's deck at 70 feet. There are two different species—Blue

JEWFISH BOOM ON THE WRECKS OF KEY WEST

Jewfish started turning up on the Cayman Salvage Master seven years ago, shortly after the Florida Marine Fisheries Commission put a state wide moratorium on harvesting this species. More of them show up during mating season in the spring.

A deep wreck one mile south of the Cayman Salvage Master has even more Jewfish. The USS *Curb* is a 213 foot long Navy cable layer that lies in 185 feet of water with her deck at 165 feet. Capt. Glenn says there are at least five Jewfish on this wreck, each estimated to weigh 500 pounds. During the mating season in March or April the males turn white. He says you can hear them “booming” as divers begin their descent to the wreck.

Still another wreck loaded with Jewfish is the *Alexander*, a 300 foot long Navy Destroyer Escort broken in half and lying in 35 to 40 feet of water. She was sunk in 1972 and lies in the gulf, west of Key West. Capt. Glenn says there are eight Jewfish on this wreck, including both adults and juveniles. The juveniles weigh 15 to 25 pounds and are brightly colored. Other dive sites inhabited by Jewfish include *Joe's Tug*, *Kedge Ledge*, *High Rocks* and *Western Sambo*.

and Queen. The Blue Angelfish is not common in the Caribbean but quite plentiful in Florida waters. It is similar in coloring to the Queen Angelfish but lacks the blue crown on the forehead. We made two 80 foot dives on the Cayman Salvage Master with a 45 minute surface interval between dives. 🐠

Amy Slate's Amoray Dive Resort

BETTER THAN EVER!



photos/Stephen Frink

Amy Slate's Amoray Dive Resort, in Key Largo, Florida, has made several major improvements. A beautiful new two story Conch-style building has been built on the east end of the property. It houses the reception area, a boutique and suites. Surrounded by lush tropical vegetation and real grass, the white and raspberry trimmed building is indicative of the care and quality that has gone into every aspect of the resort.

The new Amoray Boutique features gold and silver jewelry, clothing and resort gift items—all with a seafaring or nautical motif.

The new office allows Amoray personnel to greet guests as soon as they turn off U.S. Highway 1; the computerized reservation system makes check-ins speedy. Also new are two spacious parking lots.

During the past year Amoray has tiled and redecorated rooms and begun offering a continental breakfast. Also, the property has been expanded and now offers a heated swimming pool, a small sand beach and hottub on the sundeck overlooking beautiful Florida Bay.

Amy Slate's Amoray Dive Resort has also been selected to join the Mariner Saltwater Proteam. The *Amoray Diver*, the resort's 45 foot custom catamaran, is now equipped with a pair of new 1998 Mariner 250XXL outboards

that provide the ultimate in reliability, efficiency and speed. The new Mariners are very quiet, making it easy to relax to the care-free Caribbean melodies on the boat's new marine stereo sound system.

Some of the other amenities guests enjoy aboard the *Amoray Diver* include a new camera station equipped with high pressure hose, rinse area and assembly area, freshwater showers, large side-mounted boarding ladders, a clean and spacious marine head, onboard defogging solution, ice water and a cooler and, last but not least, the most courteous, helpful and professional crew you will be able to find anywhere in the Keys.

The dock at Amy Slate's Amoray Dive Resort is the perfect place to view the December Key Largo Boat Parade, one of the largest of its kind. It's also a great place to view New Year's Eve's fabulous fireworks and the 4th of July pyrotechnics. In late August and early September, Amoray offers its annual coral spawning night dives.

For more information on Amy Slate's Amoray Dive Resort call (800)

4AMORAY, send e-mail to amoray@pennekamp.com or visit the Web site at www.pennekamp.com/amoray for information and pictures of the developments. 🐠



Top: The 45 foot custom catamaran, *Amoray Diver*, carries Amy Slate's guests to dive sites off Key Largo. Above: Amoray Dive Center's new building.



Shark Reef

SNORKELING AT WALT DISNEY WORLD

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOEL SIMON



Top: Snorkelers float in the calm, fish-filled water at Shark Reef—Walt Disney World's newest attraction at Typhoon Lagoon. **Above:** A diver cleans the fiberglass corals, sponges and other invertebrates that decorate the reef.

Kelly and Andrew Nelson had just arrived from Indiana. This was their first visit to Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida. They didn't come here to snorkel but, since the opportunity exists, they elected to try it. Although both are comfortable in the water, this was their introduction to snorkeling. Naturally, they were a bit anxious.

They checked the fit of each other's masks, put snorkels in their mouths and entered the underwater realm holding hands. Scarcely six feet beneath them, a four foot Leopard Shark gracefully slid into view. And then another shark glided by, even closer, and then another. Kelly's breathing almost stopped. When they remembered where they were, they relaxed and became tantalized by inquisitive French Angelfish, Blue Parrotfish, schools of small Yellow Grunts and a bevy of striped Sergeant Majors.

Andrew and Kelly were floating in shallow, crystal clear water amid dazzling colors and myriad reef fish. Although it felt and tasted like the sea, there was no surge, no current and no waves. In fact, they were in a totally protected environment, absolutely ideal for novice snorkelers of all ages.

They were immersed in Shark Reef, one of Walt Disney World's greatest attractions—362,000 gallons of salt water brimming with Caribbean reef fish and enthusiastic snorkelers.

This facility is just one component of a 56 acre tropical water park called Typhoon Lagoon. In addition to snorkeling with sharks, the park features a variety of entertaining water-oriented activities. Castaway Creek allows guests to hop onto inner tubes and float through a misty rain forest and a hidden grotto. Towering Mt. Mayday, a manmade 95 foot peak capped precariously with a shipwreck, is interlaced with several dynamic water slides. And the two and a half acre Typhoon Lagoon, flanked with

"We've created the most elaborate snorkeling facility of its kind in the world, where snorkelers can swim just inches away from fantastic creatures of the Caribbean."

sandy beaches, entices guests to frolic in three foot waves generated by an ingenious device.

Walt Disney Imagineer Randy Bright explains, "Upon entering Typhoon Lagoon, guests find themselves in a ramshackle, tin-roofed island village landscaped with cargo, surfboards and other marine wreckage left by the great storm."

However, where much of the theme park's attractions have been created by the Disney team's imagination, in Shark Reef, the fish, rays and sharks are quite real. According to Kym Murphy, Bright's co-executive producer, "We've created the most elaborate snorkeling facility of its kind in the world, where snorkelers can swim just inches away from fantastic creatures of the Caribbean."

As with all Disney attractions, the safety, education and comfort of guests is paramount. To ensure these standards in the watersport activities, Disney formed an alliance with the dive industry's oldest training agency, the National Association of Underwater Instructors (NAUI). With its familiar motto "Dive safety through education," NAUI has proved the perfect Disney partner to guarantee these mutual goals.

According to NAUI president Jim Bram, the relationship between the two organizations can be traced to one individual: long-time Disney employee and NAUI instructor Wayne Mitchell. After many active years in the dive industry, Wayne began working with Disney in 1971. He is now its Senior Safety Administrator and, through the years with Disney Imagineers, has created the safety infrastructure that supports all the water oriented activities.

I had the opportunity to meet Wayne during my visit. After brief introductions, the story of Typhoon Lagoon's creation unfolded.

"Although I may have been a catalyst in building our water park, all Disney projects are team efforts," said Wayne, with his customary modesty. "All our endeavors, both physical and administrative, are a complex joining of many diverse elements and, with Typhoon Lagoon, we had to learn through experience. Initially, all this land was basically swamp. Long before the Environmental Protection Agency mandated environmental impact reports, we contracted our own to ensure that our goals could be accomplished without adverse effects....It took years of work to effectively transform a bog to the lively, landscaped complex you see today."

Wayne explained that the learning process extended into the water as well as the land. "You'll notice that while the fish are quite real, the aquatic decor is not. It took us many months to determine how best to fabricate what nature had spent eons

designing. All our corals, sponges and other invertebrates are carefully reproduced in fiberglass and then colored with nontoxic paint. By limiting the biology, we are better able to focus nutrient levels specifically needed to keep the fish and the snorkelers healthy.

"With the creation of Typhoon Lagoon, new safety issues were also generated. Disney prides itself on four fundamental operating standards: safety, cleanliness, show quality and guest satisfaction. We knew Typhoon Lagoon would be an attraction with great potential

for education, quality and satisfaction. But, to ensure guest safety, we had to develop a core of qualified staff, and we began training our employees. We now have more than 200 NAUI certified divers on the property."

I was staggered by this figure and asked what they all did. Wayne explained that in the Walt Disney World complex there are seven separate water systems, all with their respective needs. "Divers do an extensive range of tasks here. They maintain more than 66 miles of canals and 770 acres of lakes, and clean the hulls of literally hundreds of boats. For example, every morning divers scrub algae from the coral structures in Shark Reef. Additionally, we have one of the state's best search and rescue teams. Although they are fully able to retrieve people, most often it's toys, eyeglasses, rings or other accidentally dropped personal items. Even though many of the waterways and lakes have very limited visibility and mud bottoms, our success rate is 98 percent."

Wayne Mitchell, Jim Bram and Ken Murdock, Walt Disney World's Director of Corporate Alliances, agree that NAUI is instrumental in the success of the park's watersports. Says Ken, "We are excited about the opportunity to associate the Shark Reef experience with one of the most respected names in diving." As the official sponsor of Shark Reef, NAUI provides recommendations on equipment and safety standards and broadens the educational component overall. Jim Bram echoes Wayne's comments regarding the team approach, "All the staff at Disney has been very receptive to new ideas....The Disney team is thoroughly professional and offers a very positive working environment."

One creative idea that has become reality is the invitation to NAUI instructors to use Shark Reef for class check-out dives. The facility is often used in this way by NAUI instructors based in Florida but was recently utilized by a NAUI class that came all the way from Germany. To make reservations for class, instructors should contact Michael Putz at (407) 560-4092.

Visiting NAUI class students receive a discount on their Walt Disney World admission ticket as an added courtesy.

Careful planning and implementation show in every aspect of the Shark Reef experience. Hundreds of people from all over the world are introduced to the joys of snorkeling each day. Many had never snorkeled before. Others would never venture into "shark infested" waters outside of the conscientious safety infrastructure of Walt Disney World.

The following day, at Wayne's sugges-

"...we were off, sliding into the refreshing water."

tion, I went through the Shark Reef activities from start to finish. After entering the complex, guests can utilize changing areas and lockers for safe keeping of personal items. Once at Shark Reef, masks, snorkels and sleeveless wetsuits are obtained. Fins aren't needed. After getting equipment, guests proceed to the pool's large entry area. While some people prefer to walk over a bridge, most take advantage of the tunnel created by the overturned steel hull of an old ship. In this passageway, guests can look through portholes beneath the water's surface, viewing other snorkelers among the fish. I chose this route, lingering near some rusty old gauges while watching the dynamic scene. This is where I met Andrew and Kelly. They stood beside me, mesmerized at the view. At the end of the corridor, a series of steps took us to a broad waterfall and the wide shallow steps used for entry.

The snorkeling instructor gave us some simple instructions: refrain from touching the fish, stay relaxed in the water while slowly swimming to the exit stairs and make sure masks and snorkels are properly in place. At the "go-ahead" sign, we were off, sliding into the refreshing water and floating among schools of French Grunts, Blue Tangs and Sergeant Majors.

I was one of the last of our group to leave the water. Just behind me, Andrew and Kelly emerged on the steps, still holding hands. "All my life I've been scared to death of sharks, I just never thought I'd be brave enough to do this!" Kelly exclaimed. As we walked to the freshwater shower, they asked me if it was dangerous to do this in the ocean. I told them it wasn't, in fact it was great fun, but that some additional training would allow them to be more comfortable.

"Where can we take some lessons?" they asked. "Give NAUI a call," I answered. "That's the best place to start."

To obtain further information on NAUI's many educational tools, diving and snorkeling instruction, and affiliated stores and resorts, call (800) 553-6284 or visit the Web site at <http://www.naui.org>.

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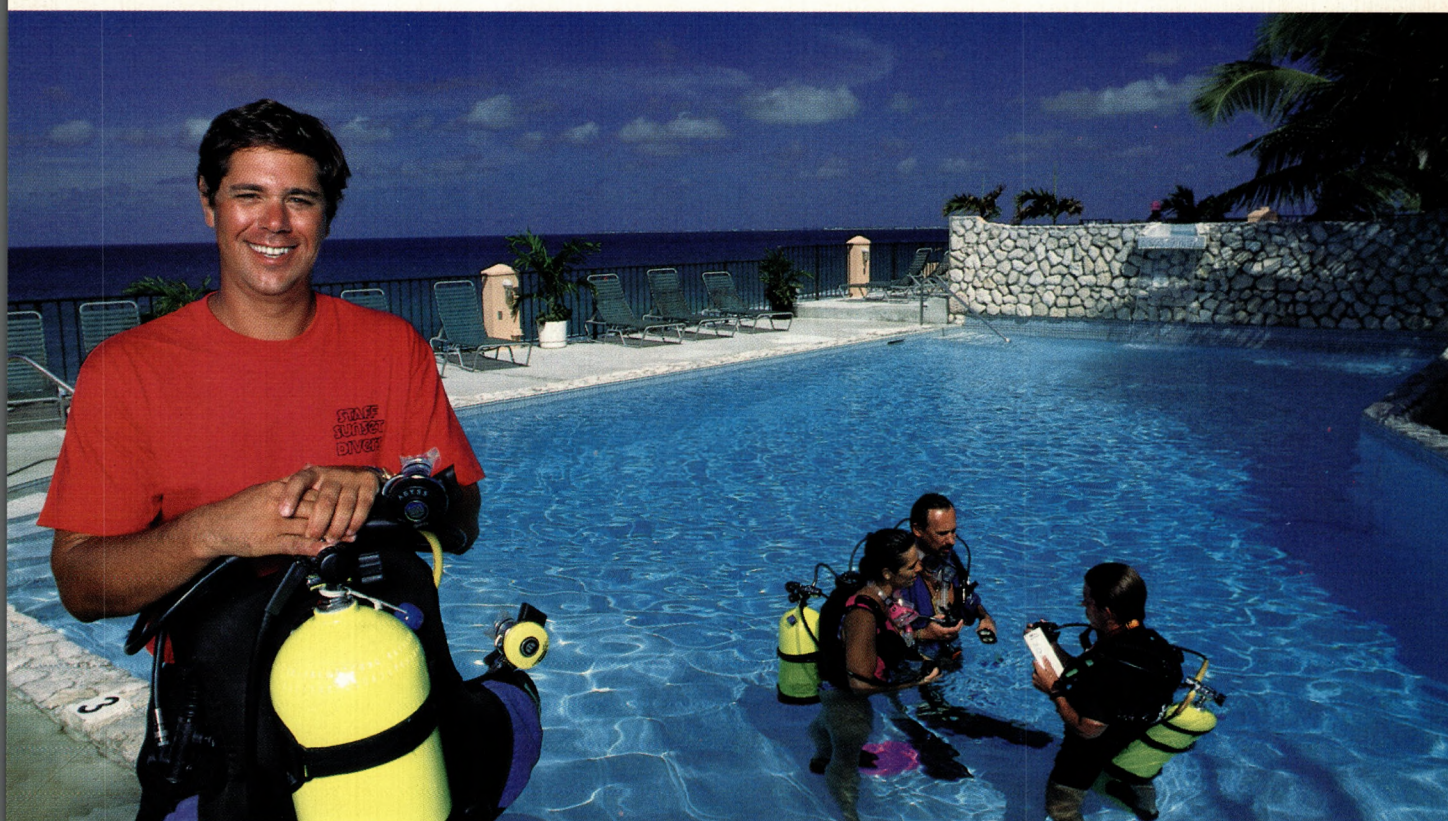
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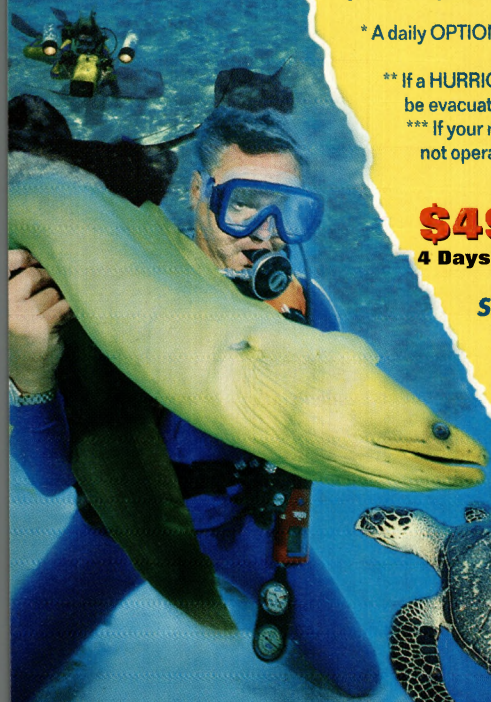
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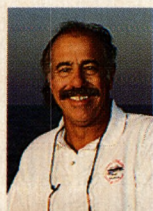


The friendly Spotted Dolphins (*Stenella attenuata*) at White Sand Ridge are some of the most photographed wild dolphins in the world.

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SEA FEVER

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY STEPHEN FRINK



Capt. Tom Guarino

The Bahamas offer some of the best dive opportunities in this hemisphere. Its ads invite us to "Discover Our Diversity. From the thrill of shipwrecks, sharks and dramatic drop-offs to the pure pleasure of shallow reefs and dolphin encounters, The Bahamas offers you more diving opportunities than anywhere else on earth."

I agree with any superlatives that might be attached to Bahamas diving. But, it is also important to note there are more than 700 islands and 2,000 cays (small islets) spread out over 100,000 square miles of tropical Atlantic Ocean. This is a massive destination and any one dive holiday to The Bahamas will deliver only a small vignette of its underwater wonders.

Yet there is a way to maximize the variety of a Bahamas dive adventure—a live-aboard dive boat. This will extend the range of dive options and deliver more pristine sites than are available from a resort base. Captain Tom Guarino and his live-aboard *Sea Fever* have refined that premise during the past 14 years (even longer if you count former incarnations of *Sea Fever* live-aboards). Now, rather than a single itinerary, the *Sea Fever* offers six unique Bahamas cruises, each chosen specifically to optimize weather variables and to assure the probability for excellent marine life encounters.

Tom Guarino began his sport diving career in 1960 in the Philippines. Tom's father was in the military and the family trav-



Above: The 90 foot *Sea Fever* is home away from home for 14 adventurous divers exploring the best of The Bahamas. Middle photo: Janette Weeks admires a brilliant Orange Elephant Ear Sponge at El Capitan off the West End of Grand Bahama.

SEA FEVER

eled frequently while Tom was young. Those early years of diving the Pacific forever shaped the direction of Tom's life. He knew his life's work would revolve around the ocean. When he was old enough he joined the Coast Guard and later opened his own dive shop in Key Largo. He bought a small six pack boat called the *Annie-Up* and began to pioneer Bahamas diving via a rather austere live-aboard. Then came a 40 foot version he

named *Sea Fever*. His years of running this boat made Tom realize he needed something faster (for greater range), more stable (for greater comfort and safety) and more spacious (for greater guest amenities). At that time, no one had considered making the crew boats working the oil fields into dive live-aboards. Yet in 1983, Tom made a bold step by acquiring and converting one. Thus was the new—and much improved—*Sea Fever* born.

The *Sea Fever* is 90 feet long with a 22 foot beam and is powered by three 12 cylinder diesel engines able to cruise at 16 knots. She is set up to accommodate 14

passengers in seven cabins and offers full air-conditioning, complete marine electronics (including radar, VHF and single sideband radios, Loran, GPS, sat nav, video fathometers and weather receiver) and, for photo enthusiasts, an E-6 darkroom. The dive deck is a state of the art affair with an oversized four tier camera table, tank racks with individual gear storage bins, freshwater showers and camera rinse and, of course, an oversized dive platform with extended ladders.

Inflatable chase boats are deployed to enhance diver safety or for shore excursions. Inflatable safety tubes are also issued to each diver.

The compressor system is of special note. Besides the two Bauer K14 compressors, the *Sea Fever* was the first live-aboard to install a UBS nitrox membrane system. This is especially viable for live-aboard applications because it eliminates the need to bring

potentially flammable pure oxygen on board and obviates the requirement for oxygen clean tanks and regulators. Instead, nitrogen is extracted from air

to yield enriched air (generally 32 percent oxygen). The live-aboard is a perfect venue to learn about and practice safe nitrox dive techniques. In fact, I got my nitrox certification aboard *Sea Fever* and highly recommend this course to future passengers.

The specific itineraries offered by *Sea Fever* include departures from its home-port of Miami Beach, Nassau (New Providence Island) and Freeport (Grand Bahama). These departures are designed to minimize open ocean runs and maximize the all important in-water dive time for guests.

FROM MIAMI BEACH: The *Sea Fever* offers a fascinating tour to the uninhabited **Cay Sal Banks** from the late spring through early fall. These rugged and picturesque islands offer some of the very best wall diving in the islands, with visibility continually in excess of 100 feet and colorful sponge and Black Coral decoration. **Snapper Reef** presents an unforgettable congregation of Schoolmasters and grunts, while at the **Shark Hole** Sharpnose Sharks are occasionally sighted. A new shark feed has developed in the **Black Hole** with reliable encounters with Caribbean Reef Sharks. **Fire Demon Cave** is a terrific wide angle photo op with shafts of light piercing a shallow tunnel.

During the fall and winter, the *Sea Fever* often tours the **Western Bahamas**, including the famed dive sites off Bimini, Cat Cay, Orange Cay and the Berry Islands. Highlights of this itinerary in-

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clude an amazing interaction with a resident pod of Spotted Dolphins found along **El Dorado Shoal**; shipwrecks such as the **Bimini Trader**, **Bimini Barge** and the **Sapona**; a high voltage shark feed featuring Caribbean Reef and Nurse Sharks at **Shark Reef**; and the rich marine life of **Tuna Alley** and **Victory Reef**. The gorgeous sand beaches and shallow Elkhorn gardens of the Berry Islands will appeal to both divers and snorkelers.

FROM NASSAU: Departures from Nassau operate from late spring through early fall and visit the Exumas, Eleuthera, Cat Island, Conception Island, Rum Cay, San Salvador, Crooked Island and the Acklins. This is not to imply all are accessible on the same trip, however, as this is too far even for the *Sea Fever*. Instead, there is an Exumas tour that takes in hot dive sites such as the **Lost Ocean Blue Hole**, **Dog Rock Wall**, **Norman's Cay**, the shark dive at **Danger Cay** and what I consider one of the world's best shallow water drift dives, the **Wax Cay Cut**. These are typically seven day trips, but there are also 12 and 14 day excursions into the Southern Bahamas that offer a high level of exploration. Many of these reefs and walls are unknown to any other operator and there is frequently the intoxicating sense of being the first diver to view these amazing wonders.

FROM FREEPORT: The departures from Freeport tour the West End of Grand Bahama and also operate from late spring to early fall. Unlike most other itineraries, there are no islands to hide behind if the winter winds kick up, so Captain Tom generally runs these tours in the summer. And magic tours they are, for the highlight is an interaction with a resident pod of Spotted Dolphins at famed **White Sand Ridge**.

Most of the underwater photos you have seen of Spotted Dolphins were taken at White Sand Ridge. Cinematographers Howard Hall and Bob Talbot have likewise immortalized this friendly pod. No one knows why they are so tolerant of divers and snorkelers. In fact, depending on their mood, they seem to seek us out for no reason other than to play. *Sea Fever* has had long experience delivering the best of these amazing encounters and does it extremely well.

Yet, the Spotted Dolphins are not the only highlights of this West End itinerary. There is also the terrific shallow shipwreck known as the **Sugar Wreck**. The site is full of fish, especially grunts and goatfish but, when the sun goes down, it is transformed into an exceptional night dive with Loggerhead Turtles, Southern Stingrays, octopus and all manner of nocturnal creatures. Shallow reefs and oceanic pinnacles are also accessible here, with sites such as **Mount Olympus**, **El Capitan** and **Crystal Palace** offering a combination of rich wide

angle potential and impressive fish life.

To learn more about the various *Sea Fever* tour options visit the Web site at www.seafever.com or, for reservations, call (800) 443-3837, (954) 202-5608 or fax (954) 351-9740. 🐟

Dive Notes

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SDM Editors Pick Items That Make Diving Safer, Easier and More Fun!

BY TAMARA COLLINS
PHOTOS BY BONNIE J. CARDONE

EDITORS' PICK OF THE MONTH

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The Elusive Seahorse

SNORKELERS ON A MISSION

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY TAMMY PELUSO



To this day, after ten years of underwater exploring, I still bubble with the exuberance of a six year old at the sight of a seahorse. This probably has something to do with my misadventures with sea monkeys during childhood. Amazingly, I encountered my first seahorse the first time I went snorkeling. It was a tiny one, about an inch high; I found it bouncing across the sand in five feet of water. I cupped it gently in my hands and raced over to show my buddy. When I got her attention, I released it near a patch of seagrass and we marveled at the antics of this bizarre little creature for half an hour. I left the water that day thinking that seahorses must be everywhere! It was six years before I saw another one.

Seahorses, along with pipefish, belong to the family

Synathidae. Common features include elongated bodies, protruding bony rings and a skinny tubular snout tipped with a tiny toothless mouth; seahorses feed primarily on plankton and tiny benthic animals. These curious creatures practice unusual mating rituals—the male seahorse fertilizes the eggs, incubates them in his kangaroo-like pouch and gives birth. The females are merely egg donors—aquatic one-night stands. After depositing their eggs through a tiny slit in the male's brood pouch, the female disappears. The male incubates the eggs for one to two weeks, eventually delivering hundreds of tiny babies—a laborious process that can last several hours. After the birthing process is completed, the male leaves his progeny to fend for themselves. Before leaving, he will occasionally gobble up a few of his newly hatched offspring. The surviving seahorses, fully developed and capable, search out a suitable environment.

The odd shape of the seahorse is unmistakable. Its tiny cocked head, long snout and languid body form gives it quirky horse-like features; its corkscrew tail and whimsical winged armor complete the vision, making it look like a creature out of a fairy tale. Fully extended, the largest species can measure up to six inches; the smallest is almost microscopic. Coloring is extremely varied, the flashiest are brilliant yellow and scarlet, most are a mixed bag of pinks, reds and countless variations of stripes, solids and polka dots. Seahorses living in Sargassum often develop fleshy appendages that help them blend in.

Despite their grand design, seahorses are poor swimmers; it can take them more than a minute to cover a foot of ground.

Fortunately, they have effective camouflage techniques and excellent maneuverability that enables them to stalk prey and elude predators. The transparent slatted dorsal fin on the seahorse's back is its most powerful means of propulsion—fluttering up to 70 times per second. A pair of pectoral fins behind the seahorse's head help with steering and

braking. Because of their inability to move quickly, seahorses live a relatively stationary existence, typically inhabiting regions of the reef where there is little or no current.

Even though seahorses are stationary, territorial and downright large in many cases, they are almost impossible to find without the help of someone who knows where they reside. The



Diligent snorkelers can find Lined Seahorses (*Hippocampus erectus*—above left) curled around sponges and corals.

photo/Bonnie J. Carraone

“Coloring is extremely varied, the flashiest are brilliant yellow and scarlet, most are a mixed bag of pinks, reds and countless variations of stripes, solids and polka dots.”

trouble is, seahorses are usually where you least expect them. I learned that several years ago during a nighttime seahorse hunt under a pier in The Bahamas. Our boat had just arrived in Grand Turk after a week long live-aboard adventure and the captain mentioned there were "lots" of seahorses under a nearby pier. Our gear was washed, dried and packed away but, for the seahorses, it was worth it.

Even though we were only going to be snorkeling in seven feet of water, we were required by local law to hire a dive-master to accompany us. Fully knowledgeable of our intentions, he sat nearby and watched, for 40 minutes, while we scoured every inch of every piling looking for seahorses. Just as I was about ready to abort my mission, my light fell on a pile of coral-encrusted fishing line, coiled at the base of a piling. As I looked around I saw there were dozens of similar clusters scattered like tumble weeds across the sandy bottom. Then it hit me—how can the seahorses be on the pilings? They have nothing to hang on-to! Within moments we had uncovered one-half dozen rather crusty, drab-colored seahorses hanging on to fishing line, blending in perfectly with their surroundings.

Seahorses exist in oceans around the world but they seem to be encountered with the greatest frequency in The Bahamas and Caribbean. At several destinations, seahorses are in such abundance they have been integrated into the underwater repertoire of attractions. Lined Seahorses (*Hippocampus erectus*) are the most common. Photos of Bonaire's seahorses have been featured in dozens of ads and articles and have won countless photo contests. The seahorses can dependably be found clutching sponges and coral in the shallow water under the Town Pier. In Dominica, there are seahorses everywhere. As soon as I arrived I asked the divemaster if he could show me a seahorse—he asked me what color.

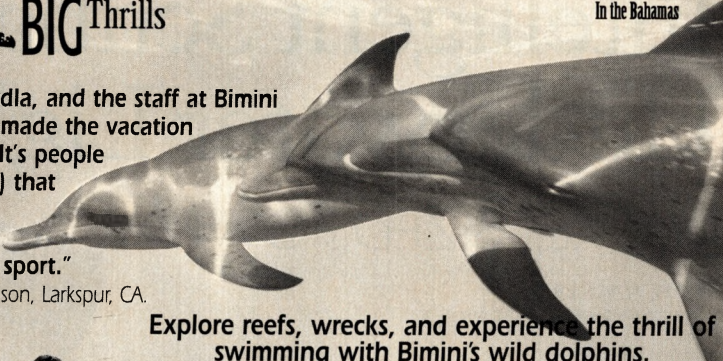
Seahorses are surprisingly docile and tolerant. They make fantastic photo subjects but often tuck their heads down and turn away, making it difficult to get a head-on, in-the-eyes photo. Both seahorses and pipefish are very territorial and have been known to inhabit the same sponge, gorgonian, Sargassum or seagrass patch for long periods of time. They are hard to find but once you know where they live you can return to see them again and again, as long as you don't disturb them. Seahorses will abandon their homes if they are aggravated excessively. Treat them gently and you can enjoy lasting lifelong memories. 🐠

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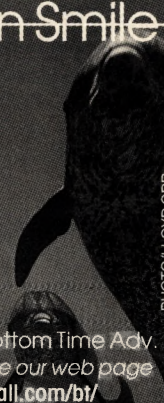


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BY JIM WALKER

PHOTO BY BONNIE J. CARDONE

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a one hour burn time, is available for \$248. For information contact Intelligent Scuba, 42 Sherwood Terrace, Suite 9, Lake Bluff, IL 60044; (800) 407-6201, (708) 735-9600 or fax (708) 735-9601. 



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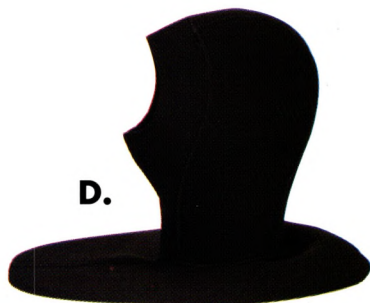
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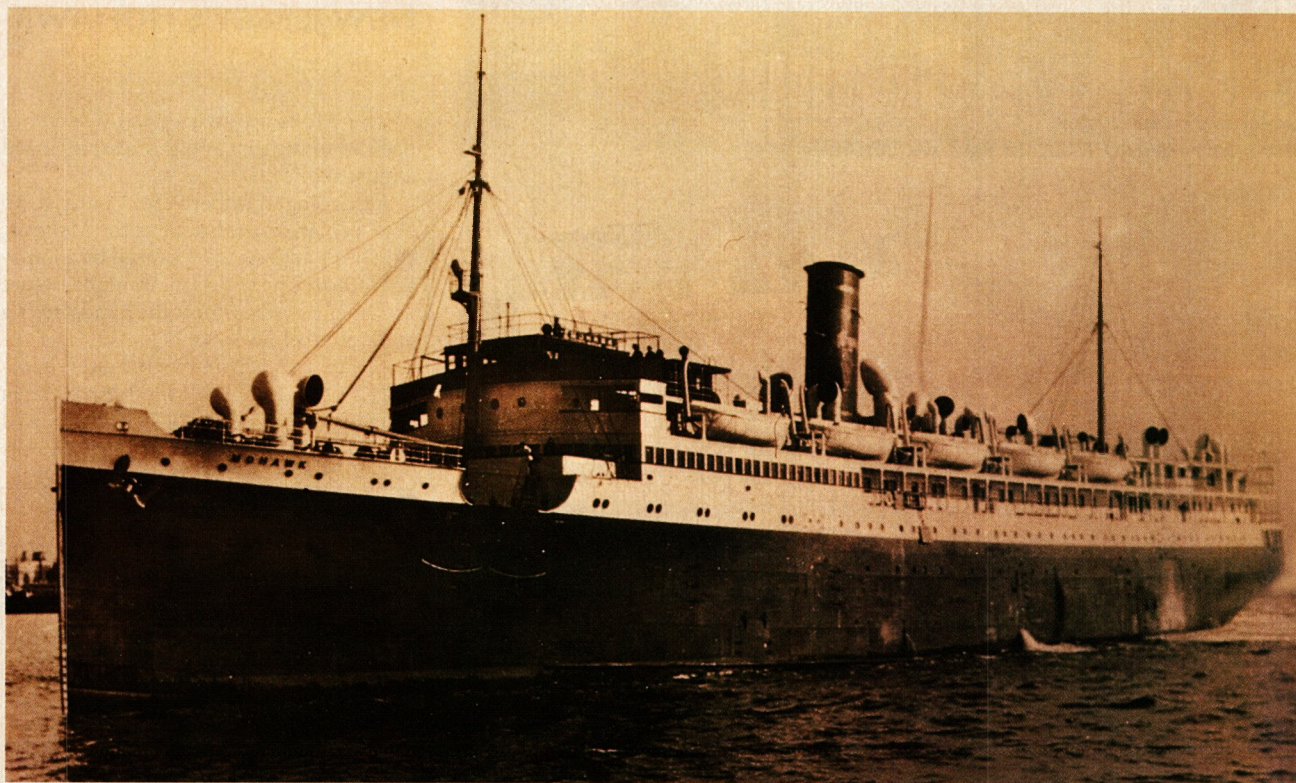
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New Jersey's Mohawk

THE LEGACY OF A COLLISION AT SEA

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY HERB SEGARS

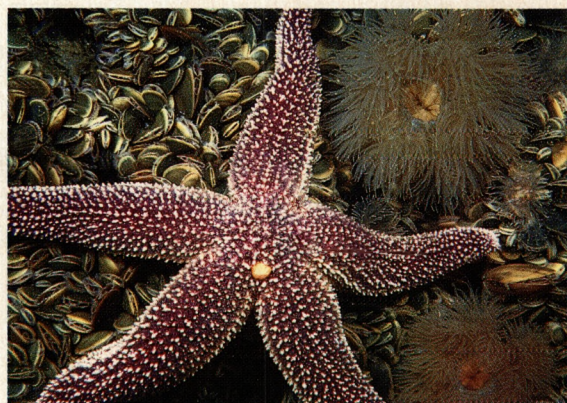


The Ward Line, a subsidiary of the Atlantic, Gulf & West Indies Steamship Line, had its share of trouble in 1934 and 1935. The pride of its line, *Morro Castle*, was destroyed by fire on September 8, 1934, off Asbury Park, New Jersey, with the loss of 124 lives. On January 6, 1935, its passenger ship *Havana* ran aground on a Bahamian reef 60 miles due east of Fort Pierce, Florida. The Ward Line called on the *Mohawk* to continue its successful Havana run.

At 4:00 pm on January 25, the *Mohawk* left her East River pier at the foot of Wall Street in Lower Manhattan, New York. She was bound for Havana, Cuba, and two Mexican ports—Progreso and Vera Cruz. She carried 53 passengers, 110 crew and a cargo of 1,286 tons. The temperature was 5°F with clear skies and calm seas as the *Mohawk* cleared Sandy Hook, New Jersey, at 5:35 pm. The Norwegian freighter *Talisman* left her pier at Thirtieth Street in Brooklyn, New York, at 6:35 pm bound for Bahia, Brazil, with a stop in Claymont, Delaware. She passed Sandy Hook at 7:08 pm.

The *Mohawk* should have been 25 miles ahead of the freighter but dawdled to recalibrate her compass. The *Talisman*, traveling at 12 knots and steering a course of nearly due south, passed the *Mohawk*.

After completing her calibrations, the *Mohawk* increased speed to 15 knots, overtaking the *Talisman* and moving abreast off the freighter's starboard side. With no warning, the *Mohawk* veered hard to port and ran directly across the *Talisman*'s bow. The *Talisman* reversed engines and attempted to turn hard to port. The *Mohawk* continued directly in front of the *Talisman* at high speed and the bow of the freighter plunged into the port side of the passenger liner. The impact, about 40 feet behind the *Mohawk*'s stem, crushed two sailors in their cabins. The speed

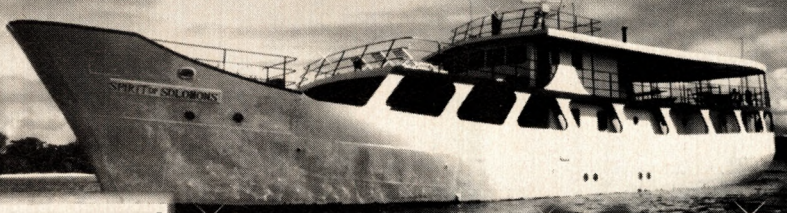


Clockwise from top: The 402 foot passenger liner *Mohawk* before it sank off the New Jersey coast in 1935. A Frilled Anemone on the superstructure of the *Mohawk* filters nutrients from the water. Seastars, Blue Mussels and a variety of anemones have also taken advantage of the artificial reef. Inset left: A plate recovered from the shipwreck.

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NEW JERSEY'S MOHAWK

of the *Mohawk* swung the *Talisman* around to the east and the vessels parted almost at once.

According to Robert "Tex" Barnett, an able seaman on the bridge of the *Mohawk*, the ship's actions were caused by a faulty telemotor. The collision occurred before crewmen could connect the handsteering apparatus below decks.

At 9:39 pm, within two minutes of impact, SOS messages flashed across both wireless sets. The slightly damaged *Talisman* radioed: "Bow damaged, but

MOHAWK SPECIFICATIONS	
Size.....	402 feet long by 54 feet wide by 20 feet deep
Construction	All steel with double bottom and water ballast tanks for stability
Freight capacity	272,500 cubic feet
Displacement.....	8,140 tons
Average speed	16 to 18 knots
Fuel capacity	6,180 barrels
Range	7,000 miles
Cost to build in 1925	In excess of \$2,000,000
Built	Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company on Oct. 21, 1925
Owner	Clyde-Mallory Lines, Inc.
Port of registry	New York, NY

not in need of assistance." The *Mohawk* listed to port, her decks awash from the collision. She began to right herself to starboard as water filled the compartments of the ship. Captain Joseph E. Wood gave the orders to have all passengers put on lifebelts and to prepare to lower lifeboats. He made an attempt to steer the ship toward the shallows of the beach but was undone by an electrical failure.

The last message sent from the *Mohawk* was at 10:23 pm, about one hour after the collision. It said: "No orders from Captain. Think that we are going to abandon ship. Very bad list." The United Fruit Company's vessel *Limon* responded to the call for help as did the liner *Algonquin*.

During the *Mohawk*'s last minutes, passengers and crew launched eight of the liner's ten lifeboats. Ice was chopped away from the blocks so the boats could be lowered to the sea. One seaman, working frantically to free a lifeboat, was crushed to death beneath it.

Passengers and crew in lifeboats closest to the *Mohawk* saw its bow go under and its bronze propeller exposed as the stern rose high in the air. People jumped from the stern into the sea. Captain Wood was seen on the bridge as the ship started to sink below the waves.

Picket boats from the Coast Guard stations at Manasquan and Shark River transferred survivors to the *Limon*. For several hours, the *Limon* and the *Algonquin* stayed in the vicinity to make sure all the lifeboats were recovered. The *Talisman* stayed at the scene throughout the night and was the last ship to leave.

At dawn, Coast Guard and Navy planes and two blimps from the Naval Air Station in Lakehurst, New Jersey, joined the search. The hulk of the *Mohawk* could be seen from the air with two lifeboats floating on the surface, still tethered to the wreck. Five bodies were spotted in an air search more than 20 miles from the collision scene and Coast Guard ship 190 made the recovery. Of the 163 on board, 15 passengers and 30 crew members were either dead or missing.

In 1935, the United States did not have safety standards for passenger liners. If the *Mohawk* had met existing international standards that required stronger bulkheads, she would not have sunk. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, angered by the needless loss of life, enacted legislation within 24 hours of the tragedy to develop a standard.

The day after the *Mohawk* reached the bottom, the United States Light House Service placed a buoy over the wreck warning of a hazard to navigation. The Ward Line considered raising the *Mohawk* but this idea never reached fruition. The passenger liner was demolished by explosives and wire dragged to lower its underwater profile.

Much of the *Mohawk* is now unrecognizable; still prominent are the bow section, boilers and winches. The wreckage is strewn over a large section of the bottom about six and a half miles off the coast of New Jersey, directly east of Normandy Beach. Her large footprint allows a number of boats to anchor at one time. With max bottom depth of 77 feet, the wreck is a good second dive for those who venture deeper on their first and is equally good for an entire day of diving.

There is a wealth of marine life on and around the *Mohawk*. *Metridium* sea anemones cover many of the surfaces as do Blue Mussels, hydroids, Northern Star Coral, starfish and barnacles. Bergalls, Blackfish and Seabass are found on the upper portions of the wreck while ling, Pollack, Eel Pouts and Sea Robins inhabit the bottom. The steel structure provides plenty of nooks and crannies for the New Jersey diver's favorite game species—the

North American Lobster. In the sand, fluke, flounder, skates, scallops, Burrowing Anemones, Sand Dollars, Moon Snails and hermit crabs add to the smorgasbord of marine life.

For those who hunt artifacts rather than food, the *Mohawk* continues to yield treasures of tin, silver and china. During the last eight years, divers have brought up more than 800 pieces of china with a blue rose pattern manufactured by the W.H. Grindley Company. The best time for major finds like these seems to be in the spring or early summer, after the winter storms have churned up the bottom.

The *Mohawk* is quite large and it is easy to become disoriented. Consider using a line reel or stay on the fringe of the wreck where it meets the sandy bottom. Swim along the perimeter in one direction; then turn around and go back the same way.

A high price was paid for divers and fishermen to use the *Mohawk*. The legacy of this passenger liner has been safer boating for all, a home for a great number of marine inhabitants, a popular sportfishing location and a wonderful wreck dive. For information on charter dive boats that visit the *Mohawk*, contact the Eastern Dive Boat Association at (516) 928-3849.

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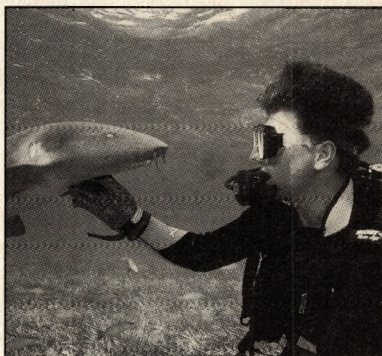
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SKIN DIVER DECEMBER 1997 135

During the past five centuries, more than 1,000 ships have been lost off Bermuda. A 19th century historian aptly dubbed the island a "graveyard of ships." The waters around Bermuda conceal more wrecks than any other area in the Western Hemisphere, with the possible exception of the Florida Keys. In several areas of the Bermuda seafloor two, and, in one case, three ships from different periods lie on top of each another.

On modern maps, Bermuda appears as a small dot in the Atlantic some 569 miles off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. However, it played a key role in early navigation and is shown disproportionately large on old maritime charts. One of the larger of the 300 isles, islets and rocks that make up the British colony, Bermuda Island was known as the Isle of Devils because of its perilous waters.

The first settlers arrived on Bermuda as a result of a shipwreck. The *Sea Venture*, an English ship carrying colonists to the Virginia Plantation, wrecked off the island in 1609. In May of 1610, the survivors reached Virginia but some returned to Bermuda and founded a colony.

From earliest times Bermudans engaged in salvaging shipwrecks. When

William Phips first reached *Nuestra Señora de la Concepción* on Silver Shoals he discovered Bermudan wreckers had already beat him to the galleon and recovered a substantial amount of treasure. As late as World War II, salvaging wrecks was still an important occupation for Bermudans. Thousands of tons of scrap iron were salvaged from wrecks for the war effort, including untold numbers of cannons and anchors, which made finding the wrecks later more difficult.

The first major treasure recovery in this century was made in 1955 by Teddy Tucker, a Bermudan descended from the island's first governor. Tucker learned to dive at the age of 12. He was so fascinated with the underwater environment that he constructed his own diving helmet. He placed a glass window in one-half of a small boiler tank and attached one end of a garden hose to the top, the other end to a hand pump on the surface. With this contraption, young Teddy and several school chums explored Bermuda's coral reefs; they made plenty of money selling seafans, shells and coral to tourists.

When WW II broke out, Tucker joined the Royal British Navy. After the war he spent three years as a commercial diver in the Far East and Indian Ocean, salvaging

ships lost during the war. Returning to Bermuda he started a commercial salvage firm with his partner and brother in law, Bob Canton. When the salvage business was slow they also fished commercially.

In 1950, Tucker spotted two iron cannons in about 25 feet of water. Several days later he and Canton returned to the spot, which was about ten miles off Hamilton Harbour. The two men raised both cannons, as well as a large copper kettle full of lead musket balls. They planned to sell the cannons as scrap iron, but members of the Bermuda Monuments Trust Commission offered them a great deal more than they would have received for scrap. They went back to the wreck site and recovered four more cannons, an anchor and a pewter plate.

Five years later, after a severe storm had passed through the area, the two men stopped at the wreck site and Tucker jumped in wearing a facemask. Reaching the bottom he saw a piece of metal and pulled it out. It was a beautifully decorated bronze apothecary's mortar bearing the date of 1561. Excited by the find, he returned to the boat and donned a Desco shallow water diving mask. Using a small piece of board, Tucker fanned the sand where he had found the mortar and un-

Bermuda's

BY ROBERT F. MARX

12 Undiscovered



photos/Geri Murphy

covered a handful of blackened silver coins. He then dug a trench about seven inches deep and saw a gleaming object. It was a gold cube weighing two ounces. Tucker was so intoxicated by this find that he bumped his head on the bottom of the boat while surfacing.

Tucker and his brother in law decided to become fulltime treasure hunters. They planned to work the wreck systematically and secretly, with several trusted friends to serve as diving tenders and deckhands. Their first goal was to remove all visual signs of the wreck to keep others from finding it.

The coins and gold cube had come from a sand pocket in the coral reef that was about 60 feet in diameter. In the reef itself, which rose to within 12 feet of the surface, they located dozens of iron cannon balls and several muskets embedded in the coral. Attached to them they dis-

1 YEAR 1533: One of the richest wrecks lost off Bermuda was the 110 ton ship *Santa Maria de Portugalete*, owned by the king of Spain and commanded by Captain Juan de Leon. She carried more than two million ducats in gold artifacts that the conquistadors had plundered from the Aztecs, plus six chests of precious stones and one chest of pearls. Three years later a passing ship picked up the survivors on the southernmost island. None of her treasure was ever found.

2 YEAR 1550: The 200 ton ship *Santa Maria de la Bella*, was lost on the return from Nombre de Dios, Panama, with a cargo of more than one million pesos in Peruvian gold and silver, plus a large amount of emeralds from Colombia. The ship parted from a homebound Spanish fleet during a hurricane near Bermuda. It was presumed lost on the high seas until 1554, when two survivors picked up by a Spanish ship declared their ship had wrecked on a reef about a league west of the "main island."

3 YEAR 1551: The returning treasure fleet of this year was struck by a hurricane in the Straits of Florida. When it was seen that the capitana, or flagship, was in danger of sinking, all of her 2.5 million pesos in treasure were transferred to a merchant ship (name unknown) owned by a Señor Alcola. Alcola's ship's navigator mistakenly thought he was still 100 leagues from Bermuda and, in the dead of night, ran the ship up on the reefs. After firing several guns to signal her plight, two ships from the convoy were ordered to stay behind and find the survivors. Apparently she quickly broke up, since by first light there was no sign of the ship, her vast treasure or any survivors.

4 YEAR 1560: As the fleet of treasure galleons approached and were in sight of Bermuda, a horrendous storm struck and the capitana, carrying more than two million pesos

known amount of gold and silver from Guatemala. When survivors from this last wreck were rescued two years later, they reported finding wreckage but no traces of survivors from "a large number of ships on the beaches."

7 YEAR 1596: The 350 ton merchantman, *San Pedro*, carrying about 500,000 pesos in treasure and other cargo, was lost owing to faulty navigation. Other ships managed to rescue her crew before large seas flung her "upon the reefs." If this is the same *San Pedro* found by Tucker in 1955, there is still plenty of treasure left.

8 YEAR 1603: An unidentified galleon in the treasure fleet of Captain General Luis Fernandez de Cordova separated from the convoy in a storm and was wrecked "upon the rocks of Bermuda." (This either means she hit the shore or reefs, as reef were also called rocks in the old days.) Most of her registered treasure was recovered later by another ship of the same fleet. Later, in Spain, it was discovered she also was carrying a "vast amount of contraband gold and silver which was not recovered." The crew of this lost galleon reported seeing evidence of many other shipwrecks on the beaches of Bermuda.

9 YEAR 1622: During a storm that struck the Treasure Fleet of Captain General Fernando de Sousa, two ships were lost off Bermuda: the *San Ignacio* and the *Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepcion*. Combined they carried close to 1.45 million pesos in treasure. English settlers on Bermuda at the time recovered some of the *San Antonio*'s treasure and Tucker also found some treasure on her.

There is probably quite a bit more treasure as her remains were scattered over a large area of the seafloor. The *Limpia Concepcion* was never located and could have slipped off a reef and gone down in deeper water.

10 YEAR 1644: An English chart of Bermuda dated 1740 had the following information marked on it: "Amongst these rocks which extend above three leagues to the northeast of the island are a great number of wrecks and amongst others that of a rich Spanish ship lost about the year 1644. It was once discovered, but it is now fished for in vain. Off the southwest and west northwest section of the island are great numbers of rocks at three to four

leagues distance from land, whereby an abundance of ships have been lost." It must be remembered that during the 300 years the Spaniards ferried treasure back from the New World, many ships disappeared at sea without any notice; many of these no doubt ended up on the reefs of Bermuda.

11 YEAR 1684: The Spanish galleon *San Salvador*, carrying more than two million pesos in treasure from both Peru and Mexico, ran upon the reefs of Bermuda. After setting the ship on fire to prevent the Bermudans from getting her treasures, the crew and passengers made it ashore in small boats. Unfortunately, the ship's magazine exploded and the Bermudans reported they were only able to recover a very small part of her precious cargo, which was scattered over a wide area and covered by shifting sands.

12 YEAR 1792: The French brig *Le Grand Aanicl*, sailing from Hispaniola with "a very rich cargo of treasure," struck a reef on the west side of Bermuda "at a great distance from land and as the survivors were making rafts to reach shore,



Treasure Wrecks

in gold and silver, plus a large amount of precious stones and pearls, disappeared. It was totally lost and believed to have either foundered in deep water or on the reefs of Bermuda. No trace of her was ever found.

5 YEAR 1563: When the 55 ship treasure fleet of Captain General Juan Menéndez de Aviles was passing Bermuda, a hurricane struck, separating all of the ships. The capitana and four merchantmen, carrying more than three million pesos in treasure and other cargo, were never seen again and presumed lost on the reefs of Bermuda or nearby, in deep water.

6 YEAR 1584: Twenty-one years later a similar disaster occurred; this time with a fleet of 51 ships under the command of Captain General Antonio Manrique. While the hurricane raged, the ships did their best to keep from being cast upon the hungry jaws of Bermuda's reefs. However, six ships—three large galleons carrying a total of 3.35 million pesos in treasure and three merchantmen with some treasure and other cargo—were totally wrecked on the reefs. Later that same year, a ship sailing alone from Honduras was also wrecked, carrying an un-

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12 UNDISCOVERED TREASURE WRECKS

covered more than 200 encrusted silver Spanish and French coins. The most recent date any of them bore was 1592.

Tucker began fanning away the sand in the same area where he had discovered the gold cube. He discovered three gold buttons, each studded with three large pearls. The men were elated but an impending storm bore down on them and they were forced to run for shelter. The storm continued for three days but the minute it abated Tucker and Canton returned to the wreck. During the first hour on the bottom, Tucker discovered a round gold disc that weighed 18 ounces and contained the mark of the Spanish Crown.

A strong northeaster kept them from the wreck for three days. All of Tucker's thoughts and dreams were of treasure. In one dream, he found gold near a bright yellow Brain Coral formation. When he got back to the wreck, he found a piece of coral that looked like the one in his dream. In less than 10 minutes he found a ten and a half inch bar of 24 carat gold weighing about two pounds and another small gold cube. The bar was marked with the Spanish royal tax stamp and tally number and the name "Pinto," which he later learned was the Colombian mine that yielded the gold.

The seventh day on the wreck was the most thrilling day of Tucker's life. Fighting time he decided to use a water hose to blast away the sand on the bottom. After the sediment settled, he saw a magnificent emerald studded gold cross. There were seven emeralds, each about the size of a musket ball. When he surfaced with the dazzling cross, his wife and others aboard the boat dampened his spirits, saying the green stones couldn't possibly be real emeralds. A year later, when the cross was sent to the British Museum, the stones were positively identified as emeralds and the cross was valued at \$200,000. It is still the most valuable item ever recovered from an old shipwreck.

Before bad weather halted that year's work, Tucker and Canton had three more days of diving. More gold and pearl buttons were recovered, as well as an intriguing array of artifacts, including a ceremonial spear made by the Carib Indians, swords, muskets, a breastplate, small brass weights used by a ship's surgeon, a pair of navigational dividers, hourglasses, a pottery cruet for oil or vinegar, buckles, buttons and hundreds of cannons and musket balls.

Tucker and Canton soon discovered it was more difficult to hold on to a treasure than to find one. They had wanted to keep it a secret, but rumors were soon

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12 UNDISCOVERED TREASURE WRECKS

flying all over the island. A story soon appeared in a Bermuda newspaper, but the government, which they had feared might seize the treasure, remained silent. Having no idea of the intrinsic value of the find, Tucker contacted Mendel Peterson of the Smithsonian Institution and invited him to Bermuda to appraise the treasure. Peterson's eyes almost popped out of his head when he saw their find. After several days of study, he evaluated the treasure and artifacts at \$130,000 but subsequently raised the value to \$250,000.

After *Life* magazine ran a feature article on the find, real trouble began. Every time the men went to sea they were followed by boats trying to pinpoint the wreck. A prowler attempted to break into Tucker's house so he moved the treasure to a bank. Then the government decided the treasure was legally Bermuda's because it had been discovered in territorial waters. After an angry meeting with the Colonial Secretary, who told him the government planned to confiscate the treasure, Tucker quickly retrieved it from the bank. That night he put it in a potato sack and hid it in an underwater cave.

He learned later the government planned to confiscate the treasure for fear he would smuggle it from the island. Once officials knew he had hidden the treasure, they eased their demands. Tucker and Canton convinced them they wanted the treasure to remain on the island. They cooperated with the government in establishing a museum. Tucker's wife and several friends managed the museum, although experts assured him that he could sell the treasure for at least \$250,000. Tucker didn't want to sell it piece by piece so, in 1961, he sold the museum and all the treasure to the Bermuda government for only \$100,000; today it would be worth far more.

Mendel Peterson spent months doing historical detective work and was able to identify the wreck as the Spanish merchant vessel, *San Pedro*, lost in 1596 while sailing between Mexico and Spain. The documents did not indicate the type of cargo or the amount of treasure she carried, nor if any attempts had been made to salvage her.

In 1957, Mendel Peterson joined Tucker and Canton for the first of 25 summers of shipwreck exploration. They discovered more than 30 wreck sites the first year, ranging from early 17th to late 19th century ships. Tucker has located more than 130 wrecks around Bermuda using three methods of visual search. The waters are so clear he was able to find many sim-

ply by standing on the bow of a boat and looking down at the seafloor. When the seas were not completely calm he located wrecks by towing divers on a line behind a boat or by flying in a light plane.

Tucker and Canton continued searching during the summer of 1958 and, toward the end of the season, made another significant discovery. From the bow of a boat, Tucker sighted an iron cannon that was barely visible on the sandy bottom. The men dug a few holes with an airlift and discovered two dozen silver coins, several fragments of gold chain, a pair of brass navigational dividers, lead musket

shot and many ceramic shards. The finds indicated an old Spanish ship was buried there, so Tucker decided to devote the remainder of the season to the wreck. Each day they uncovered more of the ship's timbers and made wonderful finds: a gold ring with a large emerald, more silver coins, swords, pulley blocks, bits of rigging, leaf tobacco and many pieces of ceramic ware.

Research identified the wreck as the *San Antonio*, a Spanish merchant vessel of 300 tons that had been lost in 1621. Documents showed that colonists rescued all of the crew and passengers and

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12 UNDISCOVERED TREASURE WRECKS

salvaged much of the cargo. Work continued intermittently on the *San Antonio* during the following three summers. They found a large part of the ship's cargo of indigo and cochineal dyes and recovered several thousand cowry shells, used to purchase slaves in Africa.

In 1959 their outstanding discovery was the wreck of the *Vigo*, a small Spanish merchant vessel lost in 1639. During the two weeks remaining that season, Tucker and his team recovered a massive, three foot long gold chain, two large gold nuggets and 50 silver coins. The following season's efforts were divided between excavating the *Vigo* and the *San Antonio*.

At the end of the summer, Tucker gave Mendel Peterson several uninteresting looking coral-encrusted conglomerates for preservation. An assistant at the Smithsonian Institution removed the coral growth from one of them and found a gold ring set with three stones—emerald, almandite and crystal. On the inside of the band an inscription in Castilian read, "Yours and always will be." This lovely ring, the most important find made that year, had almost been overlooked.

During the summer of 1961, Teddy pioneered a method of locating shipwrecks using a helium filled balloon, which was towed behind a boat at an elevation of about 180 feet. The first wreck he found that way was the *Virginia Merchant*, an English merchant vessel sailing between Plymouth, England, and Jamestown, Virginia. It had been lost in 1660 with 179 persons aboard. Several weeks of excavation produced clay pipes, tools, weapons, house bricks, writing utensils, pieces of silverware, pewter plates and many fragments of chinaware and pottery.

The next week Tucker found the sister ship of the *Virginia Merchant*—the merchant vessel *Eagle*. She also had sailed between Plymouth and Jamestown with trade goods and passengers in 1659. A tremendous number of trade good artifacts were discovered on this wreck. During the excavation, Tucker and Donald Canton, Bob's brother, almost lost their lives. They were using the airlift in about 33 feet of water, next to a massive coral ridge that almost rose to the surface. Digging at the base of the coral formation they uncovered a large wooden chest filled with thousands of clay pipes. Digging deeper they found a copper teapot, then a slate and stylus, which were probably used by the ship's navigator in plotting the ship's position. Suddenly, Tucker felt a strong tremor. Years of working underwater had taught him to

(Continued on Page 150)



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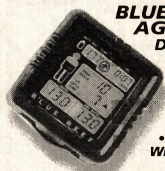
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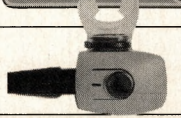
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(Continued from Page 142)

act fast. He grabbed Donald Canton and they scrambled out of the hole seconds before a huge piece of coral, weighing at least a ton, toppled into it. After a large shark harassed them the following day, Tucker decided the wreck was jinxed and spent the rest of the season completing salvage of the *San Antonio*.

During the summer of 1962, he found the French frigate *L'Hermoine*, lost in 1838. Every wreck is different, furnishing a unique assortment of artifacts that illuminate the life and times of its sinking. The French vessel yielded large numbers of weapons, shot, uniform buttons, copper powder cans, porcelain objects and glass bottles—many with their original contents. Nearby they located the remains of an English merchant ship, the *Caesar*, lost in 1819 with hundreds of grindstones of various sizes, kegs of white lead and bottles of many different descriptions.

On the last diving day of the season Tucker convinced everyone to "have a quick look" at the *San Pedro*, where they had already found so many valuable artifacts. It almost appeared that Tucker had planted treasure on the site, because he was only down a few minutes before he discovered a small gold bar, later valued at \$16,000.

Toward the close of the season, Tucker's sighting of a few ballast rocks on a sandy bottom led to discovery of the oldest ship ever found in Bermuda waters. While digging an exploratory hole on the site, he uncovered a vast amount of ballast rock buried about five feet under the sand. He also found a small clump of badly sulfated silver coins, some of which bore mid 16th century dates.

Historical research indicates it was most likely the capitana of the New Spain Fleet, lost in 1563 under the command of Captain General Juan Menéndez. Tucker and his team devoted the summers of 1963 and 1964 to excavating the site. With the exception of the small clump of silver coins discovered in the exploratory hole, no other treasure was found on this wreck; in fact, it yielded very few significant artifacts, which indicates it was probably salvaged by the Spaniards. However, its early date and that a large section of the lower hull was intact and remarkably well preserved,

convinced Peterson the wreck should be excavated. A grant funded the project, which furnished valuable archaeological data regarding the ship's construction.

I was fortunate to spend most of the summer of 1963 working with Tucker on that site. Rarely have I seen a man so passionate about his work. Every day he would jump over the side with his airlift tube and stay U/W for hours. One day he was down for 12 hours before he finally surfaced. He only came up then because the rest of us were starving to death and turned off his air compressor.

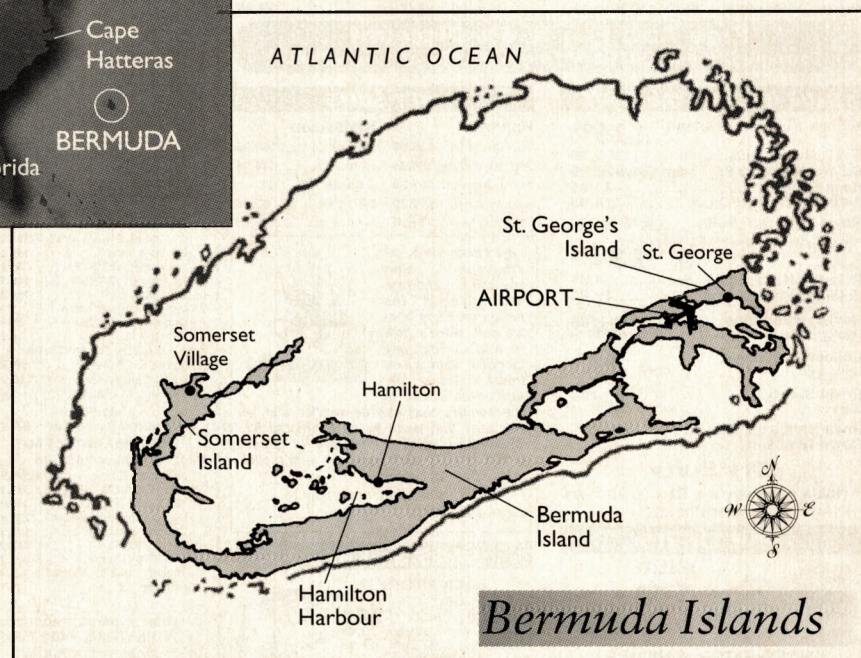
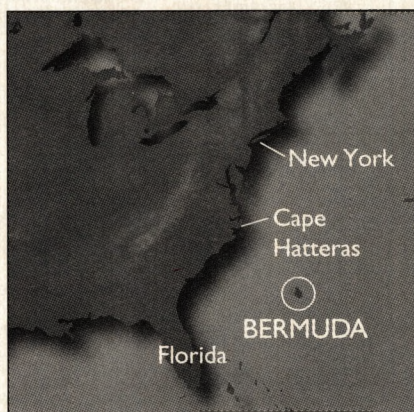
During the summers of 1965 and 1966

he returned to some of the earlier wrecks he had discovered—*Virginia Merchant*, *Eagle*,

great deal of cannon shot and personal objects, such as ivory combs, brass buttons and clay pipes.

Their most important discovery was the English merchant brig *Warwick*, which arrived from England in Castle Harbor on October 20, 1619. A month later the brig sank in the harbor during a storm. A preliminary survey of the wreck revealed extensive timber remains. The wooden hull was found to be more complete than any other yet discovered in the Western Hemisphere. The ship had settled quickly in the harbor silt, which preserved it from keel to gunwale. Tucker and Peterson devoted the next two summers to excavating the *Warwick*, which furnished a wealth of archaeological data.

Teddy Tucker wasn't the only underwater explorer in Bermuda waters. Another native Bermudan, Harry Cox,



Caesar and *L'Hermoine*—and recovered vast amounts of artifacts. In 1965 he also spent a few days on the *San Pedro* and discovered yet another gold bar, weighing 39 ounces. Peterson valued it at \$50,000 and declared it to be "the most valuable numismatic item yet discovered in the Western Hemisphere."

After searching the waters around Bermuda for so many years, Tucker felt he had located all the wrecks that could be found by visual methods. Consequently, during the summer of 1967 they conducted a magnetometer search in various areas around the island, funded by a grant from the Explorers Club of New York. The survey located a number of 19th century wrecks and a new area of material associated with the *Virginia Merchant*. They excavated it and found a

has been prowling the reefs in a relatively relaxed manner as long as Tucker. Through the years, Cox has spent weekends taking friends and sometimes tourists to an area of the reefs he calls "wreck country," where he has pinpointed more than 15 old ships. It was on such an excursion in 1968 that he discovered a richly laden Portuguese treasure ship, lost in the second half of the 16th century.

One day, as Cox and friends were returning from a day on an 18th century English merchant wreck, a man spotted a few scattered ballast stones; Cox stopped to investigate.

While everyone donned diving gear, his friend surfaced with an elephant's tusk. After thoroughly combing the area and turning up nothing more than ballast stones and a few pottery shards, ev-

everyone but Cox returned to the boat. As he relates the tale, Cox "Had a feeling that there was something great down there," so he continued searching the rapidly darkening water. He fanned in a small sand hole on a nearby reef with his hand and uncovered a silver coin. Fanning faster he soon found two gold coins and a large solid gold bracelet. He surfaced shouting, "Gold, gold!" and the others grabbed fins, masks and tanks and threw themselves overboard. In the following 45 minutes, they recovered treasure valued at more than \$200,000. The finds included a number of gold bars, pieces of gold jewelry, a massive six foot double linked gold chain, an elaborate gold manicure set, silver items and a brass mariner's astrolabe.

One of the many pieces of jewelry discovered that afternoon was a magnificently worked gold ring with a large empty socket. Cox vowed he would find the stone that once graced the ring. Two years later he actually did—it was a breathtaking five carat emerald that fit the empty socket perfectly. Cox has been back to the wreck site many times since and has found an assortment of additional artifacts, but the majority of treasure came up on that first thrilling dive. Apparently Cox has not yet found the main body of

the wreck, but rather the area where the vessel struck the reefs and dropped some of her contents.

In 1959, the 350th anniversary of the sinking of the *Sea Venture*—the event that led to the settlement of Bermuda—the government asked Teddy Tucker to locate the site of this important shipwreck. Tucker found a shipwreck that initially appeared to be that of the *Sea Venture*; however, when artifacts from it were analyzed, they were identified as being from a later period and the project was abandoned.

Then, in 1978, Allan "Smokey" Win-good, a retired professional diver and a keen student of Bermuda history, decided to locate the *Sea Venture*. After three painstaking years, he came to the conclusion that the wreck Tucker had found in 1959 was indeed the *Sea Venture*. He was right. Reexamination of the artifacts Tucker had submitted for identification proved they had been mistakenly attributed to a later period.

Excavation of the *Sea Venture* differed from previous underwater projects in Bermuda, which had concentrated on salvaging valuable artifacts and treasure. This shipwreck was mapped and excavated over a period of six summers by a team led by underwater archaeologists from

the United States and England. Today, thousands of fascinating artifacts found on the site are on display in Bermuda's Maritime Museum.

In light of a 1980 law making the Bermudan government sole owner of anything discovered in its waters, it is not surprising there have been no announcements of shipwreck discoveries during the last 15 years. Most of the old pros, including Tucker and Cox, have retired from the game. Tucker, utilizing sonar, ROVs and submersibles, is currently searching for "monsters" that may inhabit the deep ocean.

This doesn't mean, however, that divers aren't searching for shipwrecks. I have heard from sport divers who have made significant finds off Bermuda.

Fortunately the Bermuda government recently altered its policy so as to encourage controlled shipwreck exploration that benefits both the nation and the salvors. Individuals and groups can now apply for search and salvage permits and receive one-half of what they recover.

Why not head for Bermuda on your next diving holiday and try your luck at picking up a few golden doubloons? See if you can find one of the richly laden undiscovered shipwrecks described in our sidebar. 🐠

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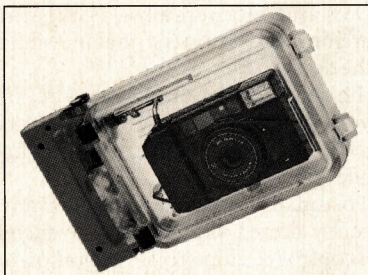
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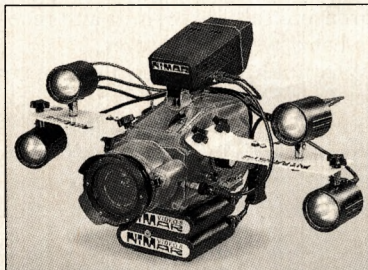
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RETURN OF THE IRON SHIP

(Continued from Page 110)

full head of steam powering the bronze propeller, the strange looking submarine made its descent in the Alfred Dock leaving only a trail of bubbles. The engine had been stopped in deference to its perspiring crew.

The crowd of onlookers stared and began to get worried; the craft stayed submerged for more than an hour, the residual heat providing enough power to turn the screw. When that dwindled, any forward movement had to be made by cranking a handle.

The submarine surfaced to a burst of applause. The hatch of the conning tower opened and the crew shook hands. Garrett was elated. He remarked that the next stop would be to demonstrate the sub's capabilities to Queen Victoria at the forthcoming Spithead Review.

A fortnight later at 9:00 am, on Wednesday, December 10, the trio set off down the River Mersey and headed out to sea. Keeping the land in sight they planned to travel by day and sleep ashore at night. On reaching Rhyl the crew relaxed and, during trials lasting a further ten weeks, Garrett was able to make modifications to his revolutionary craft.

So far Garrett had not attempted to arm the vessel. "First get it running smoothly," he told an inquiring shareholder, "then we can concentrate on providing weapons." Torpedoes had just begun to make their appearance and Garrett had the idea of attaching a pair of them on either side.

He also considered carrying mines to be placed beneath the hulls of enemy ships, anticipating by 60 years the damage that could be caused by Royal Navy X-Craft midget submarines to battleships such as the *Tirpitz* in World War II.

But, since he was a pragmatic person, Garrett knew the first step was to get his invention accepted. At 10:00 pm on February 24, 1880, *Resurgam* was towed out of Rhyl harbor by a small steam yacht named *Elfin*. Running into difficulty with her boilers in a rising sea, the skipper asked for Price to come aboard to help. But, seeing the stormy conditions, both Garrett and Jackson decided to come aboard also.

It was a wise move. The next morning the cable towing the submarine parted and the Reverend Garrett watched in disbelief as the *Resurgam* capsized and slowly disappeared beneath the waves, not to be seen again for more than 100 years.

Why did the ship sink? The strongest bet is because the hatch in the conning tower was only watertight when secured

from inside. As for Garrett, he would ultimately pay the price for his involvement with coal burning submarines.

He died prematurely in the United States at the age of 50, almost certainly as a result of breathing poisonous fumes that built up in the submarines with which he was later involved.

In 1996, *Resurgam II* (the name means "I shall rise again") was surveyed by the Archaeological Diving Unit based at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. Unfortunately, after the survey vessel left, divers began visiting the site and bringing up artifacts. The authorities were called and many of the artifacts were recovered. Hurley and Garrett are afraid that if something isn't done soon there won't be anything left of the sub to raise and put on display in the Royal Navy Submarine Museum.

Hurley says, "Someone has to find the money to preserve her. She is far too important a piece of naval history to be left to decay. Where she goes doesn't matter so long as people get a chance to see what a Manchester vicar achieved in 1879."

Bill Garrett was only 12 when he first heard about his great-grandad's submarine from his father, (another George) now 87 and living in New Hampshire in the United States. "From that moment it became one of my life's ambitions to find it," said Bill.

Bill first came to England when he was 17. He liked what he saw and has since made dozens of trips to the UK. Some of the time he spent researching the history of the sub—"I reckon I know every darn rivet in that boat, by now," he says—he also spent a fortune on diving expeditions trying to find it.

"Then I got a phone call from Joanne, Keith Hurley's wife in England, saying the boat had been found. It seems Keith had called her from the fishing boat and said he'd actually touched it!" Bill's immediate reaction was to grab a bottle of Scotch and yell. "I just couldn't believe it," he said. "Later, I just had to ring Keith to ask him if he had found any submarines today. Do you know what he said? 'Only one!' But that's Keith. He was really as excited as I was!"

Bill is being kept informed on the recovery. "Preservation is all important right now," he says, "But all that is up to the experts. The great news for now is that the boat's been found and soon everyone will be able to see what a remarkable man my great-granddaddy was."

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BY JIM WALKER
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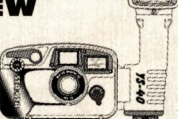
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Hose Blowout Knocks Sense Into Vacationing Diver

BY BOB STERNER

My trip to Fiji from New York had taken months of planning and 18 hours in a plane. All gear—regulators, BC, camera, lights and their backups—had been serviced ahead of schedule to make certain they would not let me down. The planning did pay off. I didn't even need a backup snorkel keeper on my two week trip.

All the backups doubled the weight of my luggage, which I hand carried onto jets, prop-driven island hoppers and dive boats, but it just added to my sense of security. I turned down offers to help tote the heavy gearbag from local operators, who are accustomed to doing everything for their guests. Like most divers who regularly visit the cold, dark waters of the East Coast, I prefer to handle and set up my own gear. Operators were generally tolerant of this personal foible until the last day.

"Guests don't handle anything here, it's against the rules," a mate cooed. Not wishing to press the point, I gave in to a little luxury. Why not enjoy the service the touring masses have come to expect. After all, isn't this a holiday? Relax. Enjoy.

The next time I saw my gear, it was on the bottom of a cart of dive bags stacked four deep and topped with a few rebreathers. It was all set up for me on board the boat, however, and worked fine on the first dive, much to my relief. I relaxed in the glow of a glorious dive as we headed back to shore just ahead of an approaching stormfront.

A sprinkle turned into a steady drizzle during lunch and some guests canceled their afternoon dive. This late summer shower didn't dampen the enthusiasm of everyone, though. There were enough divers to persuade the captain to take the boat out. Why should we be afraid of a little rain? Besides I'd been searching for a Crown of Thorns starfish all week. I'd seen the effects of the coral eating creature

but had yet to record one on film. This outing was my last chance before leaving for home.

Gold Nuggets Reef has a rocky base of corals that looks a little battered. I was curious to know if this was owing to abuse by waves and visiting divers or a Crown of Thorns incursion, so I set out to find answer, searching the reef's crevices with my flashlight. This investigative work takes time, so I trailed the pack of divers by about 40 feet. I was thinking about this departure from the customary buddy system,

my regulator. Once I had found it, a glug of bubbling water told me it wasn't working, nor was the octopus. Cursing my lack of a redundant air supply, which I usually carry on dives back home, I weighed the options that remained. It was 40 feet to the surface or the nearest diver. A controlled ascent would be no problem, unless, of course, a boat passed overhead.

Swimming nearby was a grandfatherly gent whom I'd seen at lunch talking as much with his hands as his words. Hand signs? No problem. I got his attention and he understood me at once—the air from his regulator was filling my lungs in no time. Before I could take more than a couple of breaths, the divemaster stuffed his octopus in my mouth and escorted me to the dive boat.

The source of the blast was quickly diagnosed as a blown high pressure hose. Whether it was caused by mishandling or being crammed into tight baggage bins in airplanes and boats is at question.

"It could have just been age," my local dive shop owner observed. The hose had seen more than 100 dives in six years. I realized it would be prudent to replace these hoses every five years. The experience also drove home the need to maintain remora-like closeness to a buddy. If that blast had been just a bit stronger, I might have been too stunned to seek help.

Over pints of Fiji bitters back at the hotel, I struck up a conversation with my newfound buddy, Silvio DiLoreto; a relationship that spanned a generation and many miles. It turned out he had served in World War II on Guadalcanal in the same Army Air Corps unit as my late father. Whether they actually knew each other was uncertain. Decades clouded too many memories. But just imagining the two of them chatting over pints of bitters at Henderson Field is as refreshing as a breath of fresh air. 

I LEARNED

1. *Handle gear carefully, taking special care to not kink hoses.*
2. *Replace hoses regularly. Sleeves that protect hoses from kinking can retain salt water, contributing to aging and cracking.*
3. *Stay close to a buddy.*
4. *Don't let your guard down even while vacationing at clear, warm water destinations.*

(unfortunately, my dive buddy couldn't make the trip), and about the "same ocean, same day" attitude of some New York divers, when POW! A powerful blast rocked my head to my chest, forcing me to spit out my regulator and half my air. My ears were ringing just slightly less than the roar of air gushing out behind me.

"I don't know what it is, but it's happening to me," I thought, stunned and sweeping my arm behind me in search of

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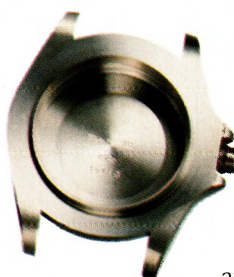
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